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Bahraini Muslim women and higher education achievement: Reproduction or opportunity?

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Bahraini Muslim women and higher education achievement: reproduction or opportunity?

by

Clare Elizabeth Beckett-McInroy

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

This research compares and contrasts the life histories of eleven Bahraini Muslim women, aged between twenty five and fifty, who are educationally 'successful', defined as having one or more university degree. It analyzes their educational experiences to see if theories of social reproduction apply to their lives. To this end, the work of Pierre Bourdieu and his concept of cultural capital in its institutionalized, objectified and embodied states are applied, where possible, to the women's life histories, in particular their educational experiences and related areas. This work shows that embodied cultural capital plays a part in the educational success of the women involved in this study, regardless of social class.

For some of the women, institutionalized and objectified cultural capital also played a part and the women who possess these tend to come from more affluent families. It also appears that significant others and critical incidents influence their educational successes. Significant others are those people who have encouraged them educationally in different ways: critical incidents include such things as government scholarships for university degree courses within Bahrain and abroad. Having these things may help other Bahraini Muslim women achieve educational 'success'. Additionally, the women's innate ability, their ability to juggle their many life projects and roles, other forms of capital (especially economic capital), their marital status, religious obligations and their culture, all influence their educational choices.

By sharing their stories some of the women felt empowered as they acknowledged their successes. Others became more aware of factors that hindered their pursuit of a second or third degree or career progression. It is hoped that their stories may be of use to other Bahraini women and girls directly as they are shared. Finally, they may also be of use to careers guidance practitioners working with Bahraini Muslim women and girls as they help them reach their potential whilst being aware of the expectations that are placed upon them by their families and society.

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This thesis is dedicated in its entirety to my family. From an early age, my parents encouraged me educationally and have also helped me financially during my different educational adventures, thank you. My husband deserves an extra special thank you for his encouragement and patience, especially during the seemingly difficult last stages of this research. And finally, little Trudy, you can have your mum back now!

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This thesis looks at the life histories of eleven Bahraini women who have achieved educational 'success', defined in this study as having achieved one university degree or more. It attempts to find out what helped or hindered their educational 'successes'. The research was conducted in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which consists of a developing Arab society with a large expatriate population and so is influenced by the West and other cultures. Bahrain is one of the more liberal Gulf countries where nationals and expatriates live and work side by side and it is ranked third in the Gulf region in the United Nations Human Development Index that focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development, these being education, living a long and healthy life and having a decent standard of living (Gulf Daily News 2005).

I examine and interpret the women's life histories with reference to Pierre Bourdieu's social reproduction theory by applying the concept of cultural capital in its embodied, objectified and institutionalized states to their stories (Bourdieu 1973; 1977; 1986a). An explanation of the meaning of these terms is provided in Chapter Three (page 17). The terms convey Bourdieu's theories abstract ideas and serve to produce my conceptual framework, my structure of concepts and/or theories which are drawn together as a plan for the study. Each life history is analyzed in its own right and then compared to those of the other women. This research tries to establish what helped or hindered the women's educational 'successes' from their personal perspective by interpreting their thoughts and emotions. I examine what motivated them to succeed in education by incorporating a picture of their experiences, influences, reflections and the resources they used.

This chapter includes a brief narrative of myself as a researcher and a careers guidance practitioner because I am part of the research process (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). I provide a description of my present job and examples of why it is important to incorporate contextualised life histories into my work, as a researcher/theorist, but also as a reflective practitioner (Schon 1983). These multiple roles are referred to as 'practitioner/researcher'.

I explain the benefits of using narrative approaches in careers education and guidance, then discuss how research, theory and practice are linked in 'theory' and can be linked in practice. This begins to clarify my rationale for the research which is further explained with examples of existing research, where I

highlight gaps in research regarding Bahraini women's educational (and career) choices. Finally, I provide an overview of the content of the thesis so that the reader is aware of the flow of the whole thesis.

1.1 A narrative of myself

My brief narrative below highlights some of my own beliefs, experiences and influences that have helped to shape the focus and form of this research. My biography has been included to allow the reader to understand how my background and lived experiences may have influenced my interpretation of the women's lives. I use 'reflexivity' in the research process whilst identifying my own embeddedness in this study (Middleton 1993; Gall et al 1996) by reflecting upon my own actions. I also highlight social and political ways I may have influenced the text.

I was brought up in a working-class environment where neither of my parents continued in education past the age of sixteen. In comparison, I am working towards my third degree and my older and younger sisters have two and one degrees respectively. My motivation to work in the challenging and worthy profession of education, along with a desire that I would not struggle financially, inspired me to succeed in education and become a teacher. As I have achieved more educationally than my parents, I questioned theories of social reproduction. I was not fortunate enough to have abundant economic capital (Bourdieu 1977) during my schooling, however, I was provided with opportunities to attend university through government grants, student loans and my parents' help. My tuition fees were paid by my local education authority. Without these incentives, I probably would not have continued with my studies; I would have taken up a job at the age of eighteen. I was somehow provided with the social, cultural and habitual dispositions (Bourdieu 1986a) that allowed me to play the educational game in a way that followed the required rules (these terms are defined in Chapter Three). It is difficult to say how my disposition was acquired and how the different forms of capital were operationalized. Was there some kind of hidden cultural capital within my nuclear or extended family that only manifested itself in my generation? Was I influenced by schooling or by high achieving middle-class friends?

Although my parents struggled financially, they paid for my private English lessons (this was a subject that I found difficult); they demonstrated embodied cultural capital through the value they placed upon education. Objectified capital was present in the form of books and my father gained qualifications on-the-job which I believe demonstrate institutionalized cultural capital.

My desire to achieve was linked to my liberal education and my interest in equal opportunities (pertinent in the 1980s during my schooling). I was in search of emancipation, especially in

relation to my life as a woman in society, and yet at the age of fifteen, my Head of Year commented that I would make someone an “...excellent wife...” because of my organizational skills. He did not stress the careers that required these skills. I began to understand why I sometimes felt I was struggling to succeed; risking stereotype, I was a woman from a working-class background.

After training as a teacher and working in the United Kingdom (U.K.) for a number of years, my career brought me to Bahrain. I became concerned for those girls and women who wanted to challenge their role in Islam, the family and society. Learning from their experiences helped me in my guidance role but I wanted to know more because of my curious personality and a desire to help them deal with their many conflicting roles. I am enthusiastic about enabling participants to express their hidden or ‘silent’ lives. To this end, I believe this work can be classed as feminist research (McLaughlin and Tierney 1993).

I am not a Bahraini Muslim woman, therefore, it may seem unusual that I have spent time, money, resources (Goodson and Sikes 2001) and energy producing this social research. However, I have been working as a teacher and guidance counselor in Bahrain for seven years, assisting Bahraini students with their career and educational choices. My school cohort consists of approximately forty per cent Bahrainis, the majority of whom choose to study at universities abroad. Some choose to stay in Bahrain, especially the Bahraini women. Others do not continue with their education despite having ‘good’ Advanced level or equivalent grades; this is more common in female Bahraini students from other schools on the island. Students making their educational and career decisions are influenced by a number of competing pressures from the family, society and their culture. I questioned how and why Bahraini women made their choices whilst learning about their unique and personal lives. My practical experiences and academic reading became the underpinning of this work. My philosophy (Watson 1994) allows me to internalize and conceptualise theory whilst aiming to apply it to practice. My work encompasses the social, political, religious, family, ethical (and other) struggles that the women have lived, in the hope that these can be shared with other Bahraini women and girls. I value the subjective and ideographic (Goodson 1992) whilst I relate Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory and specifically cultural capital, to the empirical data.

Now that I have clarified the rationale behind my subject area, I explain how narrative approaches to careers education and guidance, coupled with critical research, can help people question, reflect upon and cope more effectively with modern concepts and realities of education and career.

1.2 Narrative approaches to careers education and guidance research and practice

Narrative approaches to careers education and guidance practice, research and theory are becoming more common because the changing world of learning requires new approaches such as self-development (Maccoby in Savickas 1993) and life-long learning. The same applies to careers work (V.T. Southern Careers 1998) where it is argued that ‘career’ as a construct has died due to modern habits of projects and short-term contracts (Young and Valach 2000). A narrative approach is legitimate because traditional positivist research methods and careers education and guidance practice, do not allow for emotions or the challenges of complex multiple life roles and life projects. This is partly because work and life outside of work have become more connected where people, for example, work from home. Therefore, there are a number of studies and theories that acknowledge lived experiences and use biography and narrative that are more meaningful to (career) counsellors (Collin and Young 1992; Young and Valach 2000) and clients. I assert that narrative approaches to careers education and guidance are required, through, for example, practitioner research. This view is exemplified in my work through the use of one such narrative method, life history, which allows for the discovery of the women’s social experiences (Geiger in Ribbens 1993; Munro and Law 1994), explained in depth in Chapter Four (page 39).

Whilst working with students who are in the “...exploratory stage of career development... [*examining*] ...educational and occupational decision-making...” (Kidd et al 1997), I realized that my usual approaches did not easily transfer to a setting that had a different culture and/or religion to my own. I had to re-learn theory and experiment with new approaches to gain knowledge and understanding of students’ lives. As a practitioner/researcher, I became a reflective practitioner (Schon 1983) and more aware of my practice. I began to critique my professional performance, which is beneficial for counsellors (Irving and Williams 1995); I also re-examined career learning theories.

Theories are sets of interrelated concepts, which provide systematic views of a phenomenon. They guide practice and research. Practice can inform research and so theory as it can generate questions for research. Research contributes to theory-building; it can help practitioners and, in my case, other female students during their educational decision-making. Theory can help interpret research and subsequent practice. What is learned through practice, theory and research should interweave to create knowledge and inform future practice.

During my reading I noticed a gap in guidance, counselling and other educational theory where feelings and emotions were not encouraged. A Trait and Factor approach to career decision-making, referred to as merely putting pegs into holes (Law 1998), as opposed to a more client-centred approach such as Egan’s

model of helping (1990) part of the goal-directed orientation (Kidd 1998), shows how positivism influenced the main careers guidance approaches in Britain (Watson 1994; Kidd et al 1994). A Trait and Factor approach sees decisions as black and white. However, life has grey areas. Furthermore, educational and career decisions are not necessarily linear. They usually incorporate a host of life decisions which have financial and other implications. To this end, Egan explains the need for appropriate, (ethical and) cultural rapport with the client (Egan 1998) as we have multiple selves including our public and private selves. These are more likely to be shared if there is cultural awareness on the part of the practitioner. To this end my research investigates a life history approach to guidance where I address the needs of Bahraini women by incorporating socio-cultural issues into my work i.e. recognising social and cultural difficulties for female Bahraini Muslim students. I accepted multiple truths, learned from students and enjoyed hearing stories and dreams of emancipation.

With an open mind and a desire to learn from the inside about women's educational experiences, I hoped to find out what a sample of Bahraini women feel has helped or hindered their educational and subsequent career or life 'successes'. My central research question was:

- How do a small sample of Bahraini women perceive and explain their educational 'success' (defined as gaining one or more university degrees)?

I also wanted to develop an understanding of what they perceive as 'success'.

Although this is a small-scale, multiple case study, I hope that I can share the experiences of the women and the theory generated, with similar Bahraini girls in client-centered careers education and guidance interviews. Although the experiences of the individual cases may vary, the women's stories may help to unravel how to encourage other Bahraini girls to reach their full academic potential, whilst still following the wishes of their family, Islam and society. The research may also help the respondents develop a better understanding of their lives.

Ostensibly, there are choices and opportunities available for Bahraini women, but there appear to be factors that do not necessarily work in their favour. For example, a number of lecturers at a university in Bahrain explained that an increasing number of Bahraini women are achieving at degree level, and in some areas, more so than their male counterparts. However, their educational achievements do not always equate to 'success' in the workplace and economic 'reward' (sometimes due to their individual choices). This mirrors the experiences of a high percentage of women in the West (Arnot et al 2001). There have, however, been changes in Bahrain over the past decade. Women, along with minorities, are now present on the Shura Council, a Consultative Committee, due to the government's desire to "...reflect the diverse nature of Bahraini society..." (Bahrain Brief October 2001). Bahrain has had a female Bank

Manager, female School Principals and a female Minister of Health. But how have these women achieved educationally and subsequently in their careers? This was a question I hoped to answer.

1.3 Structure and organization of the thesis

Chapter Two provides a selective historical account of the education of women in Bahrain. It details a brief overview of developments in female education from the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. Unfortunately, research is lacking in this area; there has been no substantial research that would enable a comparative approach to, for example, other Gulf countries. However, I cover areas of policy, curriculum, provisions, initiatives and philosophy. This is selected with reference to social reproduction theory, and specifically, the concept of cultural capital. It shows how equal opportunities have manifested themselves in the schooling of girls in Bahrain and highlights the need for financial and social support, for equality of opportunities to be adhered to. It suggests a need for a greater understanding of Bahraini women, their perceived place in society and their involvement in the social reproduction of gender inequality. I provide examples of existing research related to Muslim women's educational and career achievements or aspirations to see how they compare to these women's lives.

Chapter Three explains my theoretical underpinnings for the research. My theoretical framework is a structure of concepts which exist in the literature which includes my philosophical and ethical stance. I look at Bourdieu's social reproduction theory with specific reference to the theoretical concept of cultural capital in its objectified, embodied and institutionalized forms. I critique Bourdieu and other researchers' empirical work to establish a starting point for my work, i.e. to see where there are gaps that I could fill and discuss the implications of applying Bourdieu's concepts to a non-Western context.

Chapter Four details the research design employed. This includes sample selection, data collection, a reflection on the practicalities and a rationale for conducting the life history interviews, transcription and data analysis. It also lists my research questions that were drawn from the literature review. It examines existing relevant research that has used the same research method and shows how my work was designed after reflecting on their strengths and limitations. In short, it details my rationale for using a life history approach and narrative analysis.

Chapter Five discusses my research findings and analysis of the women's stories by looking at their individual life histories then comparing and contrasting them to the other cases. Analysis is concerned with making sense of or interpreting data (Goodson and Sikes 2001). To this end,

analytical commentaries are arranged around the forms of cultural capital, my conceptual tools that have been used to make sense of, interpret and construct answers to the research questions. I provide contextual data to help elucidate the women's stories and link theory at relevant stages. This format supports the idea of closing the gap between research, theory and practice where lived experiences, in the women's own words, are interpreted by myself as a practitioner/researcher. The format helps the reader to see the multiple and contrasting experiences of the women. The stories explain how significant people and critical incidents have influenced their educational achievements whilst capturing their emotions as they juggle the many demands upon them. The women's philosophies, dreams and definitions of 'success' are shared as a way of motivating other girls and women.

The final chapter of the thesis provides a reflective overview as well as conclusions and some tentative recommendations that may help other Bahraini females gain educational and career 'success', if they so wish. It reviews my claims to knowledge drawn from the research data during analysis. It also summarizes concerns addressed by the women regarding social structures, religion and the family. This has been constructed using the women's shared visions and conclusions from my interpretation and analysis of the data. I also explain how practitioners may be able to use the findings to help women plan and manage their multiple roles, a poignant issue referred to by the women. Finally, I review the research methodology along with my dual role as a practitioner/researcher, one which I believe may cement the links between theory, policy and practice.

I did not aim to develop theory that can be widely generalized, however, some induction has meant that this work may help other women achieve their full potential in education, the work place and society as they learn about these women's experiences. This work is a knowledge for critical evaluation intellectual project, as I am critical about policy and practice (Poulson and Wallace 2003). It is informed by, and has, almost inadvertently, generated social science theory which may be useful for academics, policy makers and practitioners.

Chapter Two: The Bahrain Education System

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I provide a brief historical description of relevant developments in education in Bahrain, in relation to my research questions. I draw heavily on the work of Al Sulaiti (2002) who produced a report for the Ministry of Education in Bahrain entitled *Glimpses of Education's Development in the Kingdom of Bahrain During the Twentieth Century* and critique literature written about this. The chapter incorporates pertinent issues of religion, culture and modernity as these have influenced the development of women's education.

2.1 The education of women in Bahrain: a historical review

Before 1919, children were taught the Holy Qur'an, Arabic and arithmetic at traditional education centres. In 1919, with the help of donations, a boys' school was established followed by another in 1926, supervised by the private education committee. Next, the American Mission School introduced Western influences by teaching the English language as well as Arabic and Arithmetic (Al Sulaiti 2002). The first girls' school was opened in 1928.

2.1.1 Primary Education

Primary education was established in the 1940s and expanded in the 1950s. In the 1960s the statutory age for entering primary education was six years. At this time the Ministry of Education paid attention to developing methodology, curriculum, methods of evaluation, teacher preparation and school buildings (Al Sulaiti 2002). Then in 1982 a Bachelor of Education degree named 'Classroom Teacher' was launched at Bahrain University. In 1995/1996 improved systems of educational evaluation were introduced and design technology curricular, mastering the Qur'an and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) projects began.

2.1.2 Secondary Education

The first boys' secondary school was opened in 1940 followed by a girls' secondary school in 1951. This taught the same curriculum as the boys' schools. Secondary education was further developed in the 1970 by the introduction of new disciplines. In the 1980s system of different departments was developed (Al Sulaiti 2002). This advanced system started in boys' schools in 1990/1991 and expanded thereafter. Technology and the internet curricula were incorporated in 2000/2001. The internet was also introduced in computer laboratories in secondary schools. It was linked to learning resources and assisted school administrators and teachers.

In 1940/1941 there were twenty seven students studying for secondary education in public schools (commonly called government schools) compared to twelve thousand three hundred and sixteen in 2000/2001 (Al Sulaiti 2002). These figures were not available for male and female students separately and more recent figures were not found.

2.1.3 Technical Education

Technical education was established in 1936/1937. Its popularity was weak despite the incentive of salaries for students (Al Sulaiti 2002). Technical education included carpentry, mechanics, plumbing, electricity, auto-mechanics, refrigeration and air-conditioning, in line with the labour market requirements. Technical education became more attractive in the 1960s and 1970s due to its diversity. Then in 1986 a UNESCO agreement was signed with the Ministry of Education for the development of technical education in accordance with modular courses and a credit hour system. A new system divided technical education into technical and the practical disciplines in 1987/1988. Next, a quality committee was introduced so that the technical system kept abreast of international trends such as general vocational qualifications from Britain. All technical schools in 2000/2001 were considered approved centres for granting the vocational qualification passed by the Scottish Board (SCA).

2.1.4 Private Education

Private education paralleled the Government system at the onset. Its popularity grew with the demands of expatriate communities working in Bahrain, due to economic growth. Private education is supervised by the Ministry of Education which assumes control of the plans, curricula and textbooks, financial affairs, fees and tuition expenses. The Amiri Decree Number twenty five in 1998 encouraged the opening of private education and training institutions. This growth has been rapid, especially for higher education provision.

2.1.5 Illiteracy Eradication

Bahrain has been actively working towards illiteracy eradication since the 1930s through the help of volunteers working in clubs as well as through individual citizens' assistance. Classes were restricted to men until the early 1960s when women's societies started to introduce classes for females. Census information shows that in 1971 the percentage of illiterate people in the ten to forty four age group amongst men was 28.1% and 59.1% amongst women. Recent literacy figures show that illiteracy amongst males and females, following targets for eradication set in 1983, has dropped to 4.9% in 2000 (Al Sulaiti 2002). Efforts to increase participation in continuing education have been supported by a framework established in 1976. It aims to

enhance educational opportunities for adults and upgrade their professional capabilities (Al Sulaiti 2002).

This account of the structure of education in Bahrain has provided a mostly factual overview of the education of women in Bahrain. It was difficult to find literature in this area. I have relied heavily on Al Sulaiti's work (2002) which was produced as a publicity document for the Ministry of Education.

2.2 Education in relation to Islam, the family and society

Below is a critique of the research relating to the education of Bahraini Muslim girls. It brings together existing research and looks at how some of the contentious issues surrounding the area have been tackled.

In the U.K. there have been studies concerning parental interest in education regarding, for example, encouraging children to succeed (Steedman 1995), class and parental involvement in schools (Deutsch 1967; Lareau 2001; Bagley et al 1997) and how parental behaviour determines educational performance (Epstein in Lareau 2001; Marjoribanks in Lareau 2001). There are no similar studies in Bahrain to date. Linking these to the concepts of cultural capital, I was interested particularly in how class, race, religion and gender affect outlooks on education; how cultures and social systems withhold things from women (Steedman 1995) and how schools draw unevenly upon resources of different classes (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). The religious influence was of particular interest due to the way the Western media have portrayed Islam in recent years. As Armstrong (2000 p. iv) explains "...no religion in the modern world is as feared and misunderstood as Islam. It haunts the popular Western imagination as an extreme faith that promotes authoritarian government, female oppression, civil war and terrorism...".

Although more and more Bahraini women are receiving a 'good' education (Stowasser 1993) entering the workplace and pursuing careers that would previously be impossible to contemplate, in Islam, views of women are firmly entrenched in the maternal family role. In addition, in Bahrain people of higher income and/or of higher educational attainment are said to share similar behavioural characteristics, regardless of their religious, ethnic or social categories (Fakhro 1990). Modernists who advocate women's reform are in the minority and also tend to come from wealthier families that have been educated in the West and are sympathetic to 'modern' views (Bashier 1985). These women have travelled and are more worldly, in comparison to rural women who are believed to 'suffer' the most from tradition (Fakhro 1990). Western influences

over women are a concern for some, more fundamental, sectors of Muslim society (Mernissi 1985).

Some traditional values remain dominant, although Bahrain differs from other Gulf countries as people have a rather enlightened attitude to new ideas (Fakhro 1990). However, women's issues are still progressing at a slow pace of development in Bahrain (Fakhro 1990). At present young women appear ever more committed to traditional dress and religious practices such as Friday prayers in the mosque. In the public and private sector, women are participating under the symbols of Islam (Stowasser 1993), which may be distinguished from other aspects of Islam, such as its philosophy and ideology.

The Qur'an sees men and women having different, but equal, roles: a man as a husband takes care of his family, similar to God's relationships with humanity (Rippin 1993). God is the guardian of women and her role is to support him, and provide the best conditions for nurturing their children in the faith of Islam whilst preparing them to be good human beings and good members of society. By men mixing freely with women before marriage, through education or in the work place, it is felt that they may not find any need for marriage and women who are financially independent may find they have no need for men, possibly creating a single class of men and women that are uncommon to Islam whose roles would need definition (Hassan 1998). In particular, single women are somewhat alien to Islam due to its foundations in the family; their identity is problematized because women are defined in terms of their relationship with men (i.e. mother, daughter, wife).

For some Bahraini women, marriage is liberating as they can do things they could not pursue as a daughter. It is argued that the nuclear family is breaking down when women work and children are left with maids, as a result, Islamic values are neglected (Pirzada and Puir 1998). However, some women find that their husbands are sharing family responsibilities, which brings a family closer together and strengthens Islamic values. In contrast, a career has meant that some women postpone marriage or choose to remain single (Pirzada and Puir 1998).

Regarding women's marketability the "...perceived social roles for women influence the type and nature of education they receive, which in turn affect their view of themselves and the jobs to which they might aspire..." (International Labour Conference 71st session ILO 1985). One of the great modernist reformers, involved in 'improving' the status of women in Islam in the 1930s and 1940s, Mahmud Muhammad Taha, believed that the original principle in Islam was one of gender

equality, based on the teachings of the Qur'an because on the Day of Judgement God will hold men and women accountable individually for their actions (Mahmoud 1996). However, Taha and other modern Muslim thinkers, although promoting the education and employment of women, believe this should firstly enhance good motherhood, and secondly reward women financially for working in the home. These ideas are ingrained in the idea of the traditional 'maternal' role. The concept of girls being educated to manage a family (Weiner et al 2001) is not unique to Bahrain, in fact it is a key characteristic of all patriarchal societies. Contemporary Islamic modernists believe that the essential role of a woman is to be a mother, but that this role includes that of an educator, hence, a woman needs to be involved in education in order to pass on knowledge to future generations (Bashier 1985).

Education and employment of women brought about changes to the institution of marriage; marriage in 1997 was down 30% over the previous fifteen years (Al Makhlooq 1996) although most Bahraini women still marry before the age of twenty four. In addition, divorce rates have recently halved, possibly due to stronger Islamic values (Al Makhlooq 1996). Pirzada and Puir (1998) revealed a variety of opinions suggested by three generations of men who were interviewed about the role of women; some men had liberal thoughts whereas others held extremely conservative views, regardless of their age. They universally expressed fears that the changing attitudes of gender roles could compromise the traditions of Islam. This view is explained by Smith (1980) as social changes are not seen as compatible with the idea of the women's role within Islam; "Key emphasis is put on obedience of a wife to her husband; in fact the argument can and has been made that a woman, by definition, can live a socially and religiously fulfilling life only within the structure of marriage and in relation to her husband..." (p12).

Traditionalists, modernists and fundamentalists, although expressing differing views, have looked into historical religious texts to find answers to the changes that modernisation has brought, striving for compatibility between the two. Stowaser (1993) sees that the role of both married and single working women must be redesigned within the Islamic framework. To this end, Rippin (1993) believes that Muslim women have created their own form of Western feminism within Islam; they believe that Western feminism has nothing in common with how a women's role is viewed in Islam. In fact, some believe that the first feminist was a Muslim (Fakhro 1990), therefore, feminism and women's liberation did not come from the West; the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) fought for women's rights, saw them as equal human beings, encouraged an end to female infanticide and gave women the right to inheritance over 1400 years ago. My

experiences have shown that Muslim women seem to define their own feminism communally and individually, within the teachings of Islam, which, for example, preserve their respect from men.

Modernists' views contradict the views of the conservative traditional trend, who argue for keeping women in the home. Traditionalists believe that the family, as an institution, is in danger if women are employed in the workplace as their religious duties would be reduced by neglecting the family (and postponing marriage); "...if they are allowed to freely express their latent potential, these ambitious women will contraitze radical changes which will shake the underpinnings of the Islamic society in its entirety and forever..." (El-Bahnassawi 1985 p125). Contraitze is translated as an act of contriving, especially when deceitfully planned. Mernissi believes that Muslim men are fearful of gender equality and are ill equipped to deal with strong liberal women, "...to include women in education and production implies sexual desegregation... [however] many people believe this to be against Islam and its laws..." (Mernissi 1985 p14).

Conflict is evident where parents wish to educate their daughters to participate freely in modern society whilst keeping their roots as a Muslim woman (Minai 1981). Though apprehensive of the encouragements of the West to reason and question, which may challenge the teachings of the Qur'an, they encourage rights to an education. Stowasser (1993) sees that with the increase in women's literacy and education, this knowledge will bring with it women who are more socially and politically ambitious, which can give them a greater identification with religion. By women from all secular vocations reading and discussing the Qur'an, they can draw on the role models of women in early historical, matriarchal periods who had greater influences on Islam. This is not fighting patriarchal oppression or supporting Western liberation, but interpreting their own forms of liberation whilst living their lives in the public arena, because of, for example, mixed gender classes.

The 1950s and 1960s brought a demand for education by women who felt that they should be given a chance to participate in social and economic arenas, regardless of the changes this would make to the historical traditions of family life. To some, education outside the home was seen as a threat to the very core of Islam due to the importance of the family, traditional gender roles and marriage which are seen as the means of preserving Islam whilst maintaining equilibrium of Muslim society (Doi 1989). It is believed that the media and increased opportunities to travel to further their education (as higher education was not available in Bahrain at this time), encouraged exposure to Western influences such as culture and fashions. There is also a concern that Muslim

society seems unable to cope with the threat of Western influences over women. There may not be a place for liberated self-determined woman (Mernissi 1985).

Cultural problems can restrict some women's involvement in education and training programmes; some females find it difficult to break the social barriers by gaining jobs considered to be men's work such as in electrical and mechanical areas or tourism (Fakhro 1990). Therefore, Fakhro advocates increased awareness within the community to encourage women and men to play equal roles in society and the economy. This would require efforts to encourage non-stereotypical career choices for women (and men) as well as training in occupations where women are underrepresented. In March 2005, the Supreme Council for Women (Bahrain Brief April 2005) began a national strategy for advancement of Bahraini women (United Nations Development Programme 2005) aimed at achieving full participation of women in the work force so that they can occupy leadership and decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. It also aims to challenge stereotypes of women and eliminate all forms of discrimination against them. However, forms of training also needs to be addressed because the timings of classes may not be ideal for females due to family obligations and social norms that keep women confined to their homes at certain times (Fakhro 1990).

Other educational initiatives include, for example, in April 2004, the wife of the Crown Prince, Sheikha Hala bint Duaij Al Khalifa, promoting the fostering of cultural awareness and learning capabilities through various activities. Sheikha Hala offered several thousand books in Arabic and English on the International Book Day to help children achieve higher cultural and educational levels. Also, in order to provide a cost-effective approach for meeting some of the critical social and educational needs of Bahrain's disadvantaged communities (UNESCO 2000), Bahrain began a Mother and Child Early Education Program in the 1990s which is a research-based, home-intervention programme that addresses the lack of affordable, public pre-schools in Bahrain. It provides poor families, specifically mothers, with the tools needed to educate their pre-school aged children at home. In addition, the Ministry of Education continues to provide "...outstanding students and employees in the education fields..." with internal and external scholarships and grants out of its keen interest for these able citizens to seek knowledge, in line with its policies and objectives (Ministry of Education 2001/2002).

This section has highlighted some issues relating to the education of Bahraini Muslim women, including conflicts that inhibit their educational achievements. I now address why there are an increasing number of students attending universities in Bahrain.

2.3 The increasing number of Bahraini students attending universities

In 1968 the number of Bahraini students in Arab and foreign universities reached five hundred males and females. By 2000/2001 there were one thousand six hundred and nineteen students at universities in Bahrain or foreign universities (Al Sulaiti 2000). A number of lecturers from Bahrain universities informed me that the number of females studying and achieving at degree level in Bahrain was higher in most areas than the number of males due to families preferring their girls to study in Bahrain so that they could stay at home. Unfortunately, I was unable to find statistics that looked at gender, nationality and achievement of graduates at university in Bahrain, such as Bahrain University, Arabian Gulf University or the College of Health Science, because statistics provide the number of students and their gender alone. There is an increasing number of Bahraini women graduating from universities outside of Bahrain. In 2001/2002, this equated to 59.6% of male and 40.4% of female Bahraini graduates (Ministry of Education 2001/2002). More recent information was not available and data did not distinguished between the number of Bahraini females who attended universities outside of Bahrain, but in another Muslim country as opposed to those who attended universities in non-Muslim countries. Also, it was not possible to find statistics that broke this number down into male and female students.

The Royal University for Women opened in 2005 (Gulf Daily News 2005) which meant that women no longer have to study alongside men; this has been an issue for some Muslim women and girls who have been used to single-sex schooling. It has introduced courses that were previously only offered at degree level outside of Bahrain which may encourage women to reach their academic potential and complete degree courses in their chosen areas.

Since 1927 the Department of Education acknowledged the importance of higher education and set aside funds for it. It selected the top and elite performers so that they could continue their higher education in Arab universities and universities in friendly countries; a definition of top or elite performers was not available (Al Sulaiti 2002), therefore, it is not clear if the students were chosen on merit alone.

Bahrain has policies aimed at improving the education of its nationals, as a means of personal development and to prepare them to replace non-national workers (Birks and Rimmer 1984; Gulf Industry 2005). For example, in 2001 the government launched the National Employment and Training Programme which aims to secure productive employment for new university graduates (International Labour Organization 2001). These initiatives promote academic and technical skills directed towards increasing the number of Bahrainis in the workforce. Despite this,

women's educational credentials are not always used efficiently as a resource; therefore, meritocracy - a system where high achievers, through their efforts, go on to gain the top positions in society - is not always working.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the complexity of Bahraini women's educational decisions in relation to Islam, the family and their culture. In the last hundred years the education system in Bahrain has come a long way. Now, free education for all and a broad range of subjects are available to girls and boys (Stowasser 1993) and government scholarships are awarded for able students regardless of their gender. However, with regards to educational achievement, difficulties have arisen due to cultural norms for females to look after siblings, marry young and take on the majority of the housework and childrearing (Fakhro 1990). These things have restricted their chances of educational success. There is also a concern that if more women become educated, they will become ambitious (Stowasser 1993; International Labour Conference 71st session ILO 1985). However, meritocracy does not appear to work for the majority of Bahraini women in the workplace where they struggle for the higher positions; women endure substantial pay and hiring discrimination (United Nations Development Programme 2005).

The next chapter details my theoretical framework and concepts related to Pierre Bourdieu's social reproduction theory. I examine Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital by detailing empirical work related to this concept. Chapter two and three together stand as a background and foundation to my research questions, research design, empirical findings, then subsequent discussion and conclusions.

Chapter Three: Theoretical framework

3.0 Introduction: Why have I chosen to use the work of Pierre Bourdieu?

This chapter explains my theoretical framework. I begin by exploring social reproduction and the theoretical concepts underpinning this theory, with specific reference to the work of Pierre Bourdieu. I focus on the concept of cultural capital but explain the meaning of the terms social, economic and symbolic capital as well as habitus, field and symbolic violence and critique Bourdieu's empirical work as well as other related empirical work that challenges or supports his theory. I also discuss the implications of transferring Bourdieu's concepts to a non-Western context. Next, I review literature from a methodological angle. Finally, I explain how my literature review has informed my research questions and my own empirical work.

3.1 Bourdieu's social reproduction theory

This section explains the theories of social reproduction. It provides details of Bourdieu's theory specifically and defines the concepts that he used to underpin his theory.

In *Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction*, Bourdieu (1973) explains cultural reproduction where disadvantages and inequalities are passed down from one generation to the next and advantages are accessed and operationalized. This is partly due to the education system and other social institutions. Bernstein (2000) and others, were also concerned with the social reproduction of advantage and explained that there are social class differences, relating to communication codes, which regulate and underlie message systems, especially the curriculum and pedagogy of working-class and middle-class children. These differences relate to class, power and relations in society. The codes are also explained as being tied to the division of labour where, for example, working-class jobs do not support or require abstract or, to use Bourdieu's term, critical thinking; they require merely restricted codes (Bernstein 1983). In contrast, schools and higher professions tend to require and reward the use of elaborated codes, therefore, social advantage is reproduced and reinforced through the education system. It follows that working-class children are disadvantaged due to the dominant codes of the curriculum in schools. They find it harder to achieve and subsequently use their 'merit', or qualifications.

Bourdieu's theory employs the concepts of capital, field and habitus to explain how advantage and power relations are reproduced across generations and over time. Each concept is explained below. The theory also incorporates the concept of symbolic violence where, through power relations, certain cultural norms and practices are seen as superior (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

These ideas are then institutionalized as, for example, the field of education and its systems uses these distinctions to differentiate between students. Bourdieu argues that social fields, such as the field of education, are spaces or arenas where people struggle for potential gains and resources, within defined rules. These rules are often internalized or habitualized through socialization (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu writes that "...fields present themselves systematically as structured spaces of positions whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and which can be analyzed independently of the characteristics of their occupants..." (Bourdieu 1993 p73). They are also expressed as an "...arena of struggle..." (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 p103), where actors have limited freedom, constrained by their positions in the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 p97). The laws of the different fields are those that are necessary to 'play the game' effectively (Bourdieu 1993) but are sometimes only known by those who possess advantage. Bourdieu refers to the analogy of aces in a card game being effective only if you know how to use them. Therefore, children from some families have more chances of winning in the education 'game' because they are familiar with the rules of the field of education, usually because they have been passed down to them from their parents.

The most familiar form of capital is economic capital or command over economic and material resources, which is documented by Durkheim (1893), Weber (1904) and Marx (1932) amongst others. Marx saw capital as surplus value, i.e. the quantity of the increase in the value of capital upon investment, captured by capitalists or the bourgeoisie who possess power. Marx explains the process of capital being produced as the production process itself. Terms such as cultural capital are foreign to Marxism; however, Marx recognised that social relations are a form of capital. Bourdieu suggested that social classes, especially the ruling and intellectual classes, reproduce their social and economic advantage even though there is a pretence of social mobility. Bourdieu outlines a theory of the distribution of capital, stressing that it is unequal, however, Guillory writes that although Bourdieu reproduces features of a Marxist account of capital, he does not ground the concept in the cycle of production (Guillory 1997 p382). This lack of grounding and, equally, the limited empirical application of his theory, appear to be the major difficulties of working with Bourdieu's concept of capital. All forms of capital can be realized in terms of gaining social position and advantage over others, although economic capital is the most easily transferred for a person's advantage (Bourdieu 2001). Moving on from economic capital, Bourdieu also identified cultural, social and symbolic capital.

Cultural capital, originally defined as cultural signals used in cultural and social selection (Bourdieu 1973), has generated more research than any of Bourdieu's other theoretical concepts

(Lamont and Lareau 1988). Bourdieu's social reproduction theory contradicts views of educational success or failure being related only to natural aptitude; innate ability, effort and time do not always equate to actual 'success', due to other factors such as social class, possession of cultural capital and how it is employed. Culture is viewed by Bourdieu as rule-like structures that constitute resources that can be put to strategic use (Bourdieu 2001).

Cultural capital can be embedded in the form of knowledge, skills and education and consists of any advantages a person has that provides them with a higher status in society (as well as high expectations). It can be inherited in the form of critical thinking, writing, linguistic and scientific skills (Bourdieu 1977) and is conceptualized by Bourdieu as a form of knowledge that allows the possessor to understand or interpret cultural relations and artefacts. Cultural capital is an internalized code or learned ability that enables some to link certain meanings with symbolic forms or goods that are reproduced through, for example, educational institutions (Bourdieu 1998). This knowledge is about schools themselves, linguistic competences, a humanistic culture as well as attitudes and personal styles (such as creativity or behaviours). Bourdieu's work on cultural capital explains that students from higher social class backgrounds acquire forms of cultural knowledge (i.e. cultural capital) that can be invested in scholastic pursuits for which they achieve academic qualifications because the preferences, attitudes and behaviours valued in the field of education are more typically found in middle and upper middle-class family homes. Bourdieu believes that a high income tends to shape tastes adjusted to these conditions and students who possess cultural capital in educational fields tend to gain greater educational achievement, including degree attainment.

Cultural capital represents the assortment of non-economic forces including family background and social class as well as time invested in, and commitments to, education, which influence academic success. The concept of cultural capital is an attempt to explain the cultural differences that contribute to reproducing social class division. Bourdieu sees that, just as dominant economic institutions are structured to favour those who possess economic capital, educational institutions are also structured to favour those who possess cultural capital. Profits from cultural capital can be seen as a competitive advantage (Day and Wensley 1988) for moving up the social ladder and the possession of key forms of cultural knowledge is related to class position (Bourdieu 1994).

Bourdieu's work on cultural capital and educational success, emphasizes unequal exposure to forms of cultural knowledge and resources that are more highly valued in the social world, i.e.

‘high culture’ (Lamont and Lareau 1988). High culture consists of activities such as attending art exhibitions and classical music concerts. These are said to involve a high level of abstraction, intellectualism, and refinement (Bourdieu 1994) and can function as a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1973). Schools require, in general, for students to possess the ability to access and internalize high culture, however, it is said to be inadequately supplied by schools, and higher education institutions (Bourdieu 1994).

Social reproduction means that social structures are continued over time, in contrast to meritocracy, which assumes advancement is based on an individual’s ability or achievement. However, the patterns of gender differentiation and hierarchy found in school provision have been understood as a key to the continuing reproduction of patriarchal relations in the family and employment (Arnot et al 2001) and so it is said that meritocracy does not work in practice, with respect to women. Therefore, schools have the potential to fail those who do not inherit the language, culture and values of the upper classes and can hinder the progression of, for example, women; especially if they do not have access to the required ‘capitals’.

To recap, social reproduction theorists suggest that fairness is inhibited by the schooling system that fails so many students who do not inherit the same language, culture and values as the upper classes and so class structures limit society’s ability to identify merit (Brint 1998). In fact, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) say that meritocratic practices do little to change the active role that elite schools play in transforming cultural capital into economic capital. Bowles and Gintis as well as Willis (in Middleton 1993) have shown how schools can reproduce oppressive power relations of class, gender (and race) therefore contradicting liberal theorists who believe schools are agents of social mobility and emancipation (Middleton 1993). Many students are left behind and so the meritocratic theory is flawed by its definition of school success as merit and school failure as lack of merit. Although genetic advantages in the form of innate ability can help, the fact that we often use the term ‘intelligent’ to describe those who perform well on school tests, fails to appreciate the extent to which ‘good’ test results are socially produced (Brint 1998) because tests may only measure certain kinds of intelligence (Gardener in Armstrong 1999); they reward memory skills, quickness, calm nerves and a good store of cultural knowledge (Block and Dworkin 1976). Therefore, students who do not possess these skills are more likely to ‘fail’.

I shall now clarify the different forms of cultural capital in detail. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital exists in three forms: the embodied state “...in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind...” (Bourdieu 2001) such as a person’s values, character and way of

thinking; the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods such as pictures, books, instruments and machines and in the institutionalized state which is concerned with educational qualifications, where acquisition is related to self-improvement through a personal cost of time and money.

In its embodied state, cultural capital is incorporated within the individual and represents what they know and can do. The embodied form of cultural capital is constantly increasing in each generation and so it is said that the education system can take more for granted (Bourdieu 2001) as the family, a key source of its acquisition, provides attitudes and knowledge that make the education system comfortable for the child; they feel that, for example, the system is familiar to them, they are more likely to succeed and so reproduce their position in society. Cultural capital can also derive from people other than parents, by attendance at certain types of schools and universities that might equip people with the kind of cultural capital that will enable them to progress more easily in a social milieu. A weakness of studies concerning this area, such as Becker's work (1964) that sees investment in education as having certain expected returns, is that they do not portray an awareness of ability or talent being the product of an investment of time and cultural capital. In all forms, academic success is not just related to aptitude. Embodied cultural capital is a long-lasting attribute which can be embedded, as a sports person's physique or a doctor's specialized knowledge. Such competencies can be inherited or acquired. Thus, a talent may be evidence of cultural capital developed through a student or a parent valuing the time spent practicing and improving that talent.

Next, Bourdieu describes objectified cultural capital as material or cultural goods and media, such as paintings, which are present in the childhood environment. These exert an educative effect by their mere existence, which Bourdieu (2001) refers to as the 'Arrow effect'. To own a painting or machine represents economic capital, but machines have to be used and paintings have to be 'consumed' for embodied cultural capital to be accessed (Bourdieu 2001). Therefore, in the objectified state, cultural capital can be appropriated both materially with economic capital and symbolically via embodied capital. Next I discuss institutionalized cultural capital.

Bourdieu stresses the process of appropriating objectified cultural capital because the time it takes to acquire it, and the age it is acquired, are of importance. In addition, early domestic education is said to have a positive value in the scholastic market; lack of this input is seen as a handicap that needs to be rectified. For example, parents, although Bourdieu refers specifically to mothers (Bourdieu 1986a p253), being able to stay at home with their children, helps ensure that cultural capital is transmitted in its embodied form.

In its institutionalized state, however, it cannot come second-hand, i.e. qualifications themselves can not be passed on. Institutionalized cultural capital is “...neither transmissible (like a title of nobility) nor negotiable (like stocks and shares)...” (Bourdieu 2001 p55). It is at risk of being lost once a person dies. Similarly, wealth “...converted into an integral part of the person, into a habitus...” can not be transmitted by “...gift or bequest, purchase or exchange...” as easily to the next generation as, for example, property rights can be (Bourdieu 2001 p55). Academic credentials can be seen as an indicator of cultural competence, but the value of educational qualifications can only be measured in relationship to the labour market.

With regard to converting cultural capital into economic capital, academic investment is said to have no meaning unless, through conversion, economic gain is guaranteed (Bourdieu 2001 p51). This is particularly important considering the inflation of qualifications and schooling explosion (Bourdieu 2001) that “...are governed by changes in the structure of the chances of profit offered by the different types of capital...” (Bourdieu 2001 p51). Scarce qualifications, that are only possessed by a few (although their definition may vary over time in different places and regarding the degree of effort it takes to acquire them) hold more transferability to economic gain and cultural competences such as being able to read in a society of illiterates, offers profits of distinction for its owner (Bourdieu 2001). Therefore, a particular form of cultural capital has different values, for example, in relation to cultural capital in its objectified state, the value of goods depends on their social value and scarcity. However, educational qualifications never function perfectly because the transmission of economic capital is a means of reproduction.

Where it is not possible for all agents to study beyond the minimum age due to economic reasons, they may be unable to pay fees or may have to work to provide money for themselves or their family. Although the term ‘agent’ has not been clearly defined by Bourdieu, I use Ferber’s social science related explanation of the term, where an agent has an ability to communicate with other agents and their own resources and capabilities which can be offered as services (Ferber 1999). Some agents are able to prolong the time of acquisition of qualifications because of the privilege of time free from economic necessity to work. Time is usually available through the possession of economic capital, which is at the root of all other types of capital.

Each form of cultural capital is, at some stage, convertible into money or other usable resources to different degrees. Social class, therefore economic capital, is also relevant and yet the acquisition of cultural capital is more disguised than that of economic capital. How capital can be

acquired, exchanged and converted into other forms, how it is operationalized, is explained further in Bourdieu's work *The Forms of Capital* (1986a/2001).

I have detailed the three forms of cultural capital and I now explain social capital which is also said to affect an agent's chances of success. Social capital has been described by Bourdieu (2001 p51) as "...the aggregate of the actual and potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition...". It is a resource used by people to help them change or maintain their position in society's hierarchical structure and is concerned with relationships that benefit those involved, resources based upon social connections and membership of certain groups of social class. These relationships, according to Bourdieu, exist practically in material and/or symbolic exchanges that help to maintain them. In addition, they can be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of, for example, a family name, class or school, as well as through acts that take place within institutions. Social capital can be understood as intrinsic values inherent in friendship and other networks; individuals draw upon it to reach their desired goals. Rash and McCoy (2001) link social capital to economic success, better health and higher educational performance in one area of the United States (U.S.). Involvement in groups and social networks and developing social relations can improve one's social position in different fields. Embodiment of social capital includes membership of political parties and societies such as the Freemasons. Relationships of mutual recognition and resources based upon social connections may be institutionalized by the family group or membership of a certain class. This works as a multiplier which enhances the effects of economic and cultural capital whilst acquisition requires an internalizing process which consumes time (Bourdieu 2001). As Bourdieu assumes that capital is inheritable, this stresses the importance of primary and secondary socialization, particularly where values are transmitted. This is easy to understand in the case of economic capital (cash and assets) due to socialization where values are also transmitted, however, other forms, such as embodied capital, are less easy to reproduce and so more work is required to reproduce this form of capital.

The association between capital and profit is made explicit by Bourdieu (1997) and such an exchange is instrumental in character. Forms of capital represent resources of various kinds that can help to shape people's experience and expectations in the social world, i.e. their habits, dispositions and ways of thinking that seem normal and natural. The various forms of cultural capital (i.e. the resources) may not always be transferable across fields as the dispositions, values and ways of thinking (i.e. habitus) are. Each form of capital requires and is the product of an

investment of an appropriate kind and each can secure a return to that investment (Moore 2004). With cultural capital the major institutional form of investment is in formal education measured by quality, quantity and duration. This forms a distinctive habitus that can provide an individual with embodied social attributes that "...confer 'distinction' upon the individual and legitimacy upon the hierarchy of social inequality and the stratification of taste" (Moore 2004).

As Bourdieu also employs the concept of habitus to explain the reproduction of social advantage over time and generations, in the following section I shall clarify my understanding of the concept of habitus and how it relates to the concept of forms of capital.

The concept of habitus is seen as the key to reproduction for Bourdieu, as it generates the regular practices of social life through social conditioning. Habitus can be transported from one social field to another i.e. it can be used in different settings or fields such as education. If a person grows up in an environment where the rules of education, i.e. what is required of a student, are already known and understood, he/she acquires the appropriate habitus and so is more likely to succeed, although other issues are involved such as, personality, performance and commitment. As habitus is acquired, it becomes incorporated into the body as permanent dispositions such as posture (Bourdieu 2001), therefore, breaking the habits of one's habitus needs to be a deliberate and reflective process (Bruner 1993). Although Bourdieu explains that one's habitus consists of the internalized values passed down through generations that are influenced by social class (Bourdieu 2001), he says little about the way in which the habitus of an individual develops (Hodkinson 1998). Hodkinson, for example, used habitus to encapsulate the ways in which a person's dispositions are partly individually subjective and also influenced by the objective positions and cultural traditions in which that person lives. He adds that the life history of a person shapes and is shaped by their common sense experiences and that actions are chosen by using their dispositions. Bourdieu does not always specify clearly how habitus works at different levels of social relations and power struggles (Bernstein 2000) and as an abstract concept it can not always be easily translated empirically. In addition, habitus does not always determine outcomes educationally or socially. Habitus can be distinguished from cultural capital where a person may be exposed to cultural capital, but may not activate it. Bourdieu believes that habitus can only be measured in terms of its value within the labour market.

Bourdieu explains family habitus as a system of dispositions, expectations, and unconscious practices which collectively represent the 'embodied history' (Bourdieu and Passeron 2000) of the family. Therefore, all the attributes of an agent's environment and their unique distribution of

culture, helps to make up the primary habitus of young children. It is apparent through actions of, for example, coping with circumstances and making the most of their opportunities. It can be depicted through the examination of daily routines within the home and community and is associated with the family's ownership of capital and how they operationalize it. A person's cultural habitus, or economic possessions, need to be transferred into symbolic capital that has currency or legitimacy through their status or power. Symbolic capital is, therefore, economic or cultural capital that has been acknowledged, such as an honour and prestige. It is described as a disguised form of physical economic capital (Bourdieu 1977) and is not perceived as power exerted, but as rightful demands for such things as recognition or service.

The concept of habitus implies that, within a certain context, choices are not limitless: it challenges free will. Although there is flexibility within a habitus, complete freedom is not possible. If a person does not think of some options, then those options are not available to them. We are not fully aware of our habitus. Parts may be unconscious, such as posture, and yet, some people do consciously change their posture. Therefore, where Bourdieu's ideas have been described as reproductionist, it may be possible to break free of one's habitus, the dispositions and behaviours people acquire that informs them how to act within a social milieu (Bourdieu 2000).

According to Bourdieu, habitus, field and capital interact. For example, habitus and field enable and determine each other as structures built into different social fields, such as in society where people 'fight' for social positions as well as for the types of capital that are legitimate and useful. These fields, however, do not exist without people internalizing the required rules in accordance with their habitus. The interaction between an actor's capital and habitus plus the location of these within particular fields, appear to determine one's actions and decisions as Bourdieu formulates the connections between (cultural) capital and habitus in the following way:

$$[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})+\text{field}] = \text{practice} \text{ (Bourdieu 1984 p101)}$$

therefore, cultural and other forms of capital can be distinguished from habitus, at least analytically, in order to find causal systems.

All capital is, essentially, a form of power in a given field of interaction, but capital only has a value in a specific field (Bourdieu 1986a). In addition, different types of capital do not have the same value in a given field because each field of interaction has its own rules and practices. In addition, field is constantly changing (Grenfell and James 2004).

Through the workings of habitus, practice (agency) is linked with capital and field (structure) (Reay 2004). As habitus becomes active in relation to fields, the same habitus can be activated differently depending on the state of the field. For example, moves towards equality of opportunity for women in the public and private sectors in Bahrain means that different stances and practices are adopted at particular times. This being said, certain women may follow constraining courses of action leading to the reproduction of social conditions because that is what they feel is expected of them (Bourdieu 1990). Habitus allows for individual agency but also "...predisposes individuals towards certain ways of behaving..."; it can be used as a method for analysing the dominance of dominant groups in society and the domination of subordinate groups (Reay 2004). Therefore, habitus can be applied to the analysis of gender and social class disadvantages (McClelland in Reay 2004) which explains how it is relevant in this work.

Bourdieu views habitus and cultural capital as separate concepts although Lash (1993) perceives habitus as being made up of cultural capital, which resonates with my interpretation of the concept where embodied cultural capital, for example, influences one's habitus. I see habitus as a verb, rather than a noun because it is active when used in different fields (and to use a noun implies objectification). Therefore, habitus is how people perform in different fields and cultural capital is the things people possess. Regarding how habitus is internalized, Cicourel (1993) believes it may become tenuous once applied to "...social class aggregations within complex societies and across different cultures..." (Cicourel 1993 p5). Here, Nash (2002), for example, looked into the consequences of working-class students rejecting education offered by their school as they are unable to construct a habitus that matches the one required in that field.

Bourdieu sees habitus as a method and a way of thinking - a conceptual tool for interrogating data as opposed to just explaining it. Bourdieu writes "...my method is a manner of asking questions rather than just ideas. This I think is a critical point..." (Bourdieu in Reay 2004). It is a conceptual tool to be used in empirical research as the researcher "...becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality..." (Bourdieu in Reay 2004), as opposed to just an idea for debating in texts. Despite this, many researchers do not work with the concept of habitus as it was intended.

I now provide examples of Bourdieu's empirical work in order to illustrate his theory.

3.2 Bourdieu's empirical work

Bourdieu produced both theoretical and empirical work, grounded in everyday life. His empirical work involved, for example, showing that despite apparent freedom of choice in the arts in France, one's artistic preference, such as choice of music, correlates with one's position in society, and that subtleties of language, such as accent and grammar, are a major factor in upward social mobility (1986b). Bourdieu's work explored people's social relations within social fields as they work to maximise their life opportunities (1977).

Regarding social reproduction which provides an explanation of how social class differences continue in education, Bourdieu's contributions has been prominent where he studied French higher education (Bourdieu and Passeron 1979; Bourdieu 1988b; Bourdieu 1996). His empirical research underlines the interaction between institutional hierarchies, social class, the nature of assessment and the subject being studied, where institutional characteristics were "...used both to 'distil' principles governing the dynamic of the 'field' that could be applied in other national contexts (Wacquant, 1996) and to illustrate general theories of reproduction, habitus and forms of capital..." (Wakeling 2005). It can be concluded that lower class students have to acquire and internalize bourgeois, abstract knowledge and modes of expression, therefore, the system severely militates against working-class entry "...since what comes naturally to some must be *acquired* by others..." (Wakeling 2005).

Bourdieu found cultural capital in the form of an embodied state or a cultural habitus which were described as the existential environment of a person as it includes their beliefs, values and dispositions. Many researchers have redefined Bourdieu's concepts. Lamont and Lareau referred to cultural capital as "...institutionalized, widely shared, high status cultural signals used for social and cultural exclusion..." (1988 p156) and explain these signs as attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviours, goods and credentials. Exclusion here referred to social exclusions from jobs and cultural exclusions from high status groups.

Researchers have conducted empirical work using Bourdieu's concepts by making links between them and the empirical data. Some have been detailed below to enable me to uncover gaps in this field.

3.3 Other empirical work and related methodological issues

Below are examples of empirical work along with a discussion of further research needs. This is followed by a review of the literature relating to methodological issues and problems.

Empirical research relates cultural capital to higher school grades for high school students (DiMaggio 1982), higher education attendance, completion and marital selection (DiMaggio and Mohr 1985), cultural capital in the curriculum of elite schools (Cookson and Persell 1986) and how cultural capital is affected by social class differences which affect family/school relationships (Lareau 1987). Bourdieu's empirical work, as well as the majority of research conducted by other researchers, has focused upon undergraduate level students which denotes a gap in literature concerning cultural capital and graduates or younger students as well as those people who have dropped out of the schooling system.

With regard to cultural capital and attaining graduate degrees, researchers have often looked at graduate degree attainment in the form of the years of schooling completed or the number of degrees acquired (Kalmijn and Kraaykamp 1996). However, graduate level academic achievement, i.e. graduate grades or socio-economic status and cultural capital as influences of graduate level achievement, are lacking. Where graduate grades have been examined, research has merely indicated the validity of the Graduate Record Exam (e.g. Houser 1998). Mullen, Goyette and Soares (2003) showed that the college graduates entry gap, with regards to parents' educational levels, has some significance in relation to students who enter master's programmes, in a 1992-93 cohort from a U.S. Department of Education database (Mullen, Goyette and Soares 2003 p150). Therefore, it appears that in the U.S., college graduates, with regards to graduate school entry, are affected by their socio-economic background. However, this statistical work does not detail how the students were affected by socio-economic factors.

Moss (2005) focused upon graduate students and used the most common method of operationalizing cultural capital, survey measures, when he examined attendance and non-attendance at school. Moss acknowledged that the work fails to capture the full richness of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. He commented that for this to be done research needs to incorporate qualitative and quantitative methods. Moss used convenience sampling from one graduate institution and so certain professions may well have been omitted. He concluded that neither parental socio-economic status nor cultural capital operationalized "...as pre-college cultural participation..." had a substantively meaningful, or statistically significant, relationship with graduate academic achievement (operationalized as graduate grade point averages), therefore, Bourdieu's cultural capital theses may need adapting because "... the effects of unequal socio-economic status can become neutralized; graduate students can become academically liberated from their socio-economic origins..." (Moss 2005). This supports the earlier findings of Stolzenberg (1994).

Researchers (for example, Bernstein 2000; Brown 2001; Lareau 2001) have been concerned with the unequal status of the educational achievement of different socio-economic groups and have found that if students are from a high socio-economic status and participate in high culture activities, there is a significant positive relationship with educational outcomes. Where Bourdieu argues that high culture functions as a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1973), and influences educational performance, researchers have mainly tried to prove his theory. Such research has been conducted in the U.S. (Dumais 2002; DiMaggio and Mohr 1985; DiMaggio 1982), Brazil (Amaral 1991), Czechoslovakia and Hungary (Boguszak, Mateju and Peschar 1990), and Sweden (Roe 1983). Where research has looked at the role of parental cultural capital, it has shown that if a parent participates in high culture activities, this has a positive relationship with student cultural capital and educational achievement, demonstrated in the U.S. (Kalmijn and Kraaykamp 1996), the Netherlands (De Graff 1989), and Germany (De Graff 1988).

Van Zanten (2003) whose work focuses upon middle-class parents and children in Paris, examined the link between social reproduction and class position in education, with reference to social control. In short, differences were identified between middle-class sub-groups due to the types of capital "... economic, social and cultural – that each group possess..." (p116). For example, private-sector parents, as distinct from those working in the public sector, "...tend to see themselves as defenders of ideas of intellectual and social excellence, which are similar in many ways to those of the bourgeoisie..." (p120).

The majority of researchers working with Bourdieu's social theory tend to use one his four main theoretical constructs (habitus, capital, field, or practice) (Davis 1998; Trujillo and Diaz 1999; Zweigenhaft 1992; 1993; Lareau and Horvat 1999). Cultural capital is often used as a detached concept (Kalmijn and Kraaykamp 1996). To avoid this I have referred to Bourdieu's other concepts because of their interrelated nature, but have focused on cultural capital due to word limitations and the depth of analysis required. Some may see this as a weakness of my work, however, by referring to the other concepts during the literature review and analysis, I elucidate more fully the structures of the social world with its interconnected facets.

Regarding methodological issues, autobiographical essays assembled by Ryan and Sackrey (1996) propose that socio-economic effects may well be substantial because working-class students in liberal arts faculties felt like cultural outsiders and also had difficulty working on graduate level projects, although college graduates have been shown to become academically liberated from their socio-economic origins (Moss 2005). Some would question the rigour of

autobiographical work; I see this method as useful for examining personal issues. However, qualitative work that informs larger-scale quantitative research may justify policy changes.

Hodkinson and Sparkes (1993; 1994; 1995) conducted semi-structured interviews in the U.K. for a large research study looking at career choice and decision-making. They examined the transition from school to youth training and concentrated on a small number of young people “...who were involved with one of the first Training Credit Pilot Schemes...” (p89) (credits that the young person can use to purchase training). Hodkinson (1998) explains that Bourdieu’s work was very relevant as “...career decisions of these young people can only be understood in terms of their own life histories, wherein what Bourdieu calls *habitus* had developed and evolved through interaction with significant others, and with the culture in which the individual has lived and is living...” (p96). Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital and field became powerful heuristic devices in making sense of career decisions linked to social structures and individual’s free choice (Hodkinson 1998). Hodkinson concludes that policy and practice related to the provision of careers education and guidance needs to “...recognize the complex nature of career decision-making, and thus attain more realism” (p103). This work illustrates the need for in-depth qualitative studies.

Reay studied cultural reproduction and parental involvement in schooling by looking at the processes through which mothers help to reproduce social advantage and disadvantage. She conducted in-depth interviews with thirty three mothers and three male partners whose children attended one of two London primary schools and looked at the differential responsibilities of parents. She found Bourdieu’s concepts of cultural capital, field and habitus a useful means of “...understanding the way in which social structure interweaves with human activity within the sphere of parental involvement in education...” (Reay 1998 p59). She recognizes that Bourdieu places great importance on the family as a site of social and cultural reproduction, however, “...mothers were to be found undertaking the vast majority of the work involved in supporting children’s education...” (p60). Middle-class mothers tend to engage in replicating habitus, whereas working-class mothers attempt to transform habitus (p70). She explains that habitus and cultural capital “...as method are capable of highlighting the complex social and psychological processes underpinning maternal involvement. They also illuminate how the inequitable distribution of resources; educational, economic and cultural, contribute to a social class pattern in which working-class women’s actions are undermined and those of middle-class women sustain” and that gender, ‘race’ and class should be recognized as they produce differences “...and require reflexive considerations...” (Reay p71).

As cultural and social assets, capital can be invested in the field of higher education and so in its institutionalized form, 'academic' capital can be used as an advantage by those who possess it (Naidoo 2004). Students who do not possess certain capitals may find that they have to work hard to meet the requirements of universities who value such things as critical thinking, which is unfamiliar to them. They have to operate within a social milieu that is not natural to them.

Lareau and Horvat (1999) talk about skills required to activate cultural capital depending upon one's habitus and schools' responses to this activation. Lareau and Horvat's empirical work consisted of an ethnographic study aimed at determining the functions and variations in family and school relations depending on social class and race using purposive sampling. Cultural capital is represented through the 'right' attitudes towards educators, as schools value positive and supportive parents. Although the sample covers a cross section of socio-economic groups, stratified random sampling may have been more legitimate as individuals can be chosen at random from each socio-economic group. They conclude that social class is partially tied to school achievement and that their interpretation of cultural capital plays a key role, as does the student's ability.

Whilst interviewing mothers, Reay recognised that the notion of cultural capital with which she had started out did not accurately capture the complexities of women's lives (Reay 1998). Therefore, during data analysis she began to also use habitus as a way of considering women's attitudes and activities (Bourdieu 1985) which acts as an attempt to understand habitus as both gendered and racialized (Reay 1995). Reay believes there should be more studies that use the concept of habitus as a way of understanding socialization. With regard to race, Horvat and Antonio (1999) found that the African American girls in their study, who attended a mostly white private high school in California, were subject to symbolic violence because their personal and home habitus did not match the habitus of their school. The girls had to change their behaviours, dress and attitudes in order to fit in at the school. Similarly, Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999) found that the black people in their study had less cultural capital, and those that had measurable cultural capital did not benefit from it as much as white people, possibly because they do not have the skills to activate it (Lareau and Horvat 1999).

The concept of cultural capital has been difficult for researchers to measure or quantify. It is evident through the cultural consumption of books, art, and music as well as the consumption of food, clothes and furniture, the way people entertain, their personal values and ethical preferences

(Bourdieu 1994). Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999) and Teachman (1987), amongst others, have looked at cultural capital in terms of household educational resources, such as books in the home. Kingston (2001) argues that a broader conceptualization of cultural capital would position those not socialized with high culture under the same roof as those who do not have the resources tied to success in modern society, such as books, the use of a computer and study space. However, these two distinctions may not always be compatible as a person may be exposed to one and not the other, or may not operationalize an advantage.

It must be noted that Bourdieu's work was conducted within a specific social context during a specific time in history whilst he was working as a male, middle-class intellectual and part of the academic elite in France. I have used his concepts in a different, non-Western context where, for example, the state, laws and social norms are heavily influenced by the Islamic religion. In comparison, in France where Bourdieu conducted his research, since the French Revolution, state and religion have been seen as separate. An example of the importance of the separation of state and religion in France can be seen in the recent ruling that the hijab should not be worn in state schools by Muslim girls: a decree seen as racist by some commentators, but in principle upholding that religion is part of civil society and therefore its manifestations and rules should not be practised or supported in French state schools. By contrast, in Bahrain, Islam is embedded in various ways within the state and in its legal system (although specific practices such as wearing the hijab may be optional).

Bourdieu's concepts can be represented by different things in Bahrain where, for example, certain cultural goods, such as a television, can be recognised as objectified cultural capital because of its learning potential since expansions in free press, whereas in the West, the watching of television often has negative connotations for children as it is seen as something that is not necessarily expanding their learning. Also, as Bourdieu's abstract concepts aim to theorise, they do not always match human situations. Robbins (2004) advises us to "...look analytically at... different conditions of production of theory and [to] assess how far... [*Bourdieu's*] insights are transferable to our situation". Therefore, regarding my transposition of Bourdieu's theoretical concepts, I have, for example, justified my identification of the different forms of cultural capital during my analysis and identified how social and cultural values in Bahrain differ from those in the West.

It is difficult to observe the connection between inheriting cultural capitals and educational gains. However, these advantages and subsequent higher achievement, are also attributed to individual merit, ability and effort. If this is the case then cultural capital supports the belief that educational

competition is meritocratic (Bourdieu 1994) and yet, a graduate education has been recognised as having a role in the reproduction of socio-economic inequality (Bourdieu and Boltanski 1978). For example, the imposition of tuition fees has led to a fall in applications to Higher Education from under-represented groups in the U.K. (Ball et al 2002). Since the 1980s, following the era of equalized opportunities, the U.S. has seen a decline in the graduate rate for lower-income students (Brint 1998). This mirrors UCAS's (The University and College Admissions System) reported fall in Higher Education applications from under-represented groups which coinciding with new financial arrangements (Ball et al 2002). It appears that for meritocracy to work, it needs improved economic conditions in society and grants for low-income students (Brint 1998), because, with reference to the U.K. Naidoo (2000) explains that the thought of leaving university with vast amounts of debt may act as a disincentive "...to students from lower socioeconomic groups...". To this end, The University of Bahrain, with the help of the government has lowered their fees substantially to increase accessibility and the Bahrain government provides scholarships for very able Bahraini students (regardless of their gender, social class or parental achievement). Scholarships for students wishing to study abroad are also available from, for example, the British Council in Bahrain.

3.4 Review of literature relating to methodological issues and problems: How have other researchers investigated similar substantive topics?

Below are some examples of research related to the substantive topic along with a brief critique of their design.

Afshar (1989) who looked at the hopes, achievements and expectations of Muslim women in West Yorkshire in the U.K., conducted a three generational study of immigrant families using structured questionnaires and free ranging interviews. The author has linked religious, cultural and other influences on the women's educational and career hopes, expectations and achievements to support an underlying theory that women have different and arguably more pressures than men which restrict their career and educational success. It is evident that a range of social classes were used during the research, however, the research was only conducted in one area of the U.K., West Yorkshire, which has implications for generalizing the findings and yet they appear to be generalized to immigrant Muslim women in the U.K. The author does refer to supporting evidence from other immigrant groups. Due to the depth of the interviews, the sample size of twelve families seems adequate. It would have been interesting to see what the women would like changing, if anything, regarding their educational experiences and if they could

suggest wider issues such as policy changes. This article influenced my choice of method because it provided personal insights from the respondents.

Van Zanten's work (2003) focused on the link between class position and social reproduction in education with regards to social control amongst middle-class parents of primary school children in Paris. Interviews were conducted by research students under the author's supervision; these lasted between one and two hours. Using a number of interviewers may have caused inconsistencies in the data obtained due to questioning techniques and personal approaches, however, there were over one hundred interviews conducted and so, practically, additional interviewers were probably needed. Transcribed data were systematically analyzed and excerpts cited in the report were "...selected because they are representative of trends concerning a significant number of parents..." (p109). The findings indicated new forms of inequalities and exclusion within the middle-class and were supported by the respondents' own words.

Bell (2003) conducted a large-scale project concerned with what respondents' personal stories can teach us about race. The chosen method produced one hundred and six transcribed interviews. Again, the analysis provided clear examples of how the respondents told stories to illustrate or emphasize different points. Bell explains the value of listening to stories and this approach appeared to suit the sensitive topic area; this resonates with my work due to the openness of the respondents' answers. These issues are dealt with further in the research design chapter (p39).

Johnson and Castelli's (2002) work provides some methodological reflections regarding studies at Muslim schools, albeit in England. They mention that positivist-based research may not delve beneath the surface of the interrelated issues and subjectivities of religion and culture (p30). They talk about the importance of descriptive validity, the factual accuracy of accounts and interpretive validity, which concerns paying attention to what the respondents actually mean, as being essential in qualitative studies. I considered these points whilst working on my research design.

Lastly, Basit (1996) conducted in-depth interviews with twenty four British Asian Muslim adolescent girls, with their parents and eighteen teachers to find out their views on careers and marriage. The girls were in their final year of compulsory schooling and the sample was taken from three U.K. schools. All the girls were from a working-class background. The schools were two co-educational comprehensives and one single-sex girls' school. It was clearly stated that

this was a small, area specific sample which needs to be considered when trying to generalize the findings to girls from other backgrounds or schools, as well as different geographical locations. A range of categories was analyzed such as career decisions, ambition and parental influences as well as religious and cultural influences on their decisions. In-depth interviews appeared to be a relevant data collection tool as topic areas were covered in detail. Basit's notes of caution regarding generalizing from specific samples, was helpful when considering external validity.

3.5 A critique of Bourdieu's theory

With reference to work conducted in the U.S., Kingston (2001) explains that, with regards to transferring Bourdieu's theory, it would be necessary to presume that there are exclusionary, class-rooted, cultural practices. These may exist in France, where Bourdieu theorised, but are there parallels in other societies? I needed to consider this possibility with reference to Bahraini culture and class systems. Enjoying certain types of music, such as classical music, according to cultural capital theory, is said to be a valuable cultural resource and an elite genre, dominated by the upper class. The audiences at classical concerts in the U.S. are predominantly affluent professionals; however, there are minorities from other classes that regularly attend such concerts. In respect of country music, twenty to thirty percent of lower white collar workers are reported to listen to this genre, however, the proportion of high-level managers listening to the same music was only slightly lower (DiMaggio 1982). What constitutes 'high culture' in the West may be different in Bahrain. DiMaggio (1982) found a relationship between cultural capital and high school grades which partly supported Bourdieu's theory, but cultural capital was only weakly related to family status and other resources influence success in school, such as parenting styles and intellectual levels at home. Bourdieu theorises that teachers' values reward elite culture, therefore, teachers' perceptions of students matter and are related to achievement; however, DiMaggio found that this was not always so in relation to cultural capital. Teachers saw students as, for example, hard workers, likely to go to college, attentive.

Bourdieu discusses the cultural capital of the more affluent members of society, but all social groups possess cultural capital, although some types are more valued by society and dominant institutions at particular times or in particular places (Lareau 2001). For example, the values of the working-classes and their childrearing practices, where they instill obedience, can be advantageous in certain career positions, such as was the case for Marksmen in World War Two (Samuel Kaplan in Lareau 2001). In comparison, the values of the middle-classes, those of autonomy and self-respect (Kohn in Lareau 2001), may have been detrimental in this case. Bourdieu's research on the cultural capital of elites implies that their culture is more valued than

that of the working-classes, therefore, the role of cultural capital is potentially vulnerable. It follows that capital only makes sense in relation to field.

The concept of cultural capital has ignited a host of research (Lamont and Lareau 1988). Research has supported Bourdieu's view that parental cultural capital accounts for the differences in a student's cultural capital, and so can predict educational success, but this does not answer how some students who possess little or no capital 'succeed' in education, although Bourdieu does not write in absolute terms. This is one question that needs to be addressed.

Bourdieu's social reproduction theory explains a way of thinking to describe and analyse individuals as social actors by examining the genesis of the person, social structures and groups (Harker, Mahar and Wilkes 1990). I wanted to use the theory to look at the women's individual patterns of everyday life. Unfortunately, it was difficult to find research that looked at cultural capital from an individual's perspective and so this literature review implies a need to listen to the women's views.

3.6 My reasons for choosing to research the educational 'successes' of Bahraini women

My focus upon the educational 'successes' of Bahraini women stemmed from an interest in their culture, society and Islam. Over the past few years, despite engaging with an increasing body of literature, I became aware of the lack of research relating to the education of Arab Muslim women living in their own countries. There have been numerous recent studies relating to Muslim women and their educational and career choices in Germany, the U.K., Australia and the U.S., however, few have been conducted in the Gulf. For example, Taylor (1995) interviewed school students to help girls think about their futures. My reading was influenced by my chosen research projects during my Masters of Arts degree in Education and for Doctorate in Education modules, a need to learn more about Bahrainis and my feminist philosophy that added a personal dimension to the work. Finally, my professional experiences have shown that some Muslim women are not reaching their full academic or career 'success' for a variety of reasons. These include lack of cultural capital or the ability to operationalize it, their Islamic beliefs regarding the role of women within the family and cultural values and norms which determine what forms of cultural capital are valued and are useful for advancement. Despite this, many Bahraini Muslim women do achieve educational and career 'successes'. This poses the question, why did these women continue with their further education up to degree level and not drop out of the system earlier?

3.7 How has the literature review informed my research questions?

Whilst reviewing the literature it appeared that a qualitative study was needed which sought to provide an understanding of how and why some Bahraini Muslim women ‘succeed’ in education. After a pilot study, and whilst trying to focus my research questions, I chose to interview Bahraini Muslim women who had completed one (or more) degrees (my definition of educational success). There was no literature relating to the family’s involvement in the education of Bahrainis and yet the empirical work and theories of Bourdieu, specifically related to cultural capital, as well as other research (for example, Steedman 1995; Deutsch 1967; Lareau 2001; Bagley et al 1997; Marjoribanks in Lareau 2001) show that the family has a great influence on educational success. Studies have looked at family income and education (Weiner et al 2001), investing in education (Brown and Lauder 2001) and the reproduction of family life and/or occupational choice (Hakin 1995; Gaskell 1983); however, I was only able to find one piece of research (that studied higher education expansion in Iran with reference to supply and demand) which focussed upon Arab women in their own country (Salehi 2001). In contrast, I wanted to know, by hearing about their life histories, how cultural capital and other factors have influenced their education.

I found little literature relating to Bahraini women’s educational (and career) experiences in general and was interested in hearing from their personal perspective. There is, in fact, little research into women’s educational (and career) experiences in the Arab world or work that enables ‘successful’ women to reflect upon the process of reaching their achievements. A fair amount of research has been conducted upon Muslim girls in Britain and other developed countries in areas such as Muslim girls’ educational, social and career aspirations (Basit 1995; Basit 1996; Penn and Scattergood 1992), mothering and waged labour (McLaren 1996; Riley 1983; Kuh et al 1997; Ermisch and Wright 1992), decision-making and equality of opportunities for women (Large and Saunders 1995; Evans and Avis 1999; Griffin 1985; Arnold 1997; Abdalla 1995) and gender, schooling and the curriculum (MacDonald 1980; Taylor 1989; Hatcher 1998). There have also been numerous pieces of work regarding the education of females in Britain (Pruvis 1995; Evans 1995) and how their education differs from that of boys (Deem 1995). As there is a view often portrayed by the Western media that Arab women are oppressed, (acknowledging that this is a subjective concept but, in my view, apparent in some Arab countries where the schooling of girls is restricted or non-existent); I wanted to find out what the Bahraini women thought about the content, delivery and policies influencing their education. I also wanted to gather information about how much cultural (and other forms of) capital they possessed, their social class, their position in the family and so on. I wanted to know if they felt that they had equal chances of ‘success’ compared to other Bahraini girls and boys, what

motivated them to 'succeed' and from whom or where they believe their aspirations stemmed. As the notion of capital only has meaning in a specific field, where it is contextualised, I have included background data.

Overall, Bourdieu's work offers a theory that allows researchers to, more critically and accurately, explore how social class influences educational opportunity and how advantage can be reproduced from one generation to another. I have highlighted the use of Bourdieu's theory and drawn particular attention to the concept of cultural capital as an analytical device to help me understand what influenced educational opportunities and success.

This literature review focused my research questions as I developed a deeper understanding of cultural capital, empirical work relating to social reproduction and gaps in theory such as a lack of personal perspectives regarding the influences of cultural capital. Researchers looking at the concept of cultural capital, have mainly examined how cultural capital is a mechanism by which class inequalities in educational outcomes are maintained on Bourdieu's premise that "...cultural capital is alternatively an informal academic standard, a class attribute, a basis for social selection, and a resource for power which is salient as an indicator/basis of class position..." (Lamont and Lareau 1988 p 156). What is not detailed are the respondents' thoughts and feelings regarding cultural capital in relation to their educational 'success', or how cultural capital is consumed and reflected upon. This is important as true cultural capital is inextricably linked to intellectualized appreciation (Peterson and Kern 1996).

The strengths and limitations of existing research in the field imply that, in a statistical sense, the more cultural capital possessed, the higher the achievement in the field of education (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). However, this work will take the body of knowledge in this area forward by addressing the women's own views on how cultural capital influenced their educational success. It also investigates other factors that have helped them achieve educationally, such as government scholarships and possible liberation from their social origins through education (Stolzenberg 1994). These can be seen as critical incidents in their lives that can act as catalysts, allowing the cycle of reproduction to be broken.

Due to the subjective and multi-faceted nature of educational achievement, which many researchers have used whilst trying to examine the correlation between high achievement and high measures of cultural capital, I have focused on the women's emotions and feeling as expressed in their stories of their success, as opposed to quantitative correlations of, for example, cultural capital and test scores, which reflects a more feminist approach to the notion of 'success'.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained the theoretical framework that will be used to analyse the empirical data, namely Bourdieu's social reproduction theory, with specific reference to cultural capital. In short "Bourdieu's social theory offers a way of understanding some of the most important features of the field of educational research, whilst also providing educational researchers with a rich conceptual apparatus for their practice" (Grenfell and James 2004, p507).

As I found no research that examined social reproduction theory in relation to Bahraini or other Muslim women living in their own countries and their educational 'successes', my research questions were formed around these areas. My empirical work aims to clarify how 'successful' Bahraini women have overcome various social, economic, religious and other barriers. I have focused on their attitudes and emotions during their experiences of compulsory, further and higher education and touch briefly on their working lives as this was of particular interest to the women concerned.

I believe that the gaps in this literature review support the need for a thesis that looks at educational 'successes' by examining, comparing and contrasting life histories. I look at eleven Bahraini Muslim women, all educated to degree level, by referring to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. My justification for this sample and other methodological decisions, along with the research design for the empirical study informing the thesis, are detailed in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Research design

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter I outline how my research questions and conceptual framework have been informed by the literature review and how these have influenced my choice of methodology and research design. I use the term methodology to explain how my research proceeded (Harding 1987). I explain the process and formation of the research and elucidate why social research now accepts the researcher and their experiences as part of the research process (Maynard 1996). Included are details of my philosophical assumptions about the nature of the social world, my role within the research process and how my methodology compared to that of existing research. Linked to this is a justification for producing feminist research; for exploring the social construction of the research encounter and the research development as a lived experience (Oakley 1981; Reinharz 1992).

Following the critical review of literature in the previous chapter, I highlighted a number of areas of concern, in which there are either gaps in the existing literature, or where I thought I might apply key concepts to the context of studying women's educational experience in Bahrain. These areas shaped my research questions.

Below is my central research question:

- How did a small sample of Bahraini women perceive and explain their educational 'success' (defined as gaining one or more university degrees)?

The following sub-questions helped me to develop the central question and reflect my particular theoretical approach. They became the substantive focus for the research and were developed from the literature review:

- Why did they continue with their education up to degree level, and not drop out of the system earlier, as do many Bahraini women?
- What has helped or hindered these women with regards to their educational 'successes'?
- Where relevant, how did they manage to push against the tide of influences such as those of their family, social structures, religion, social class, gender and culture?
- How do the women feel about their 'successes'?
- How applicable is the concept of cultural capital in explaining Bahraini women's educational 'success'?

- What forms of cultural capital did the women in the study appear to possess during their childhood and schooling?
- How was this cultural capital used, if at all? Do they feel it helped them achieve their educational ‘success’ (i.e. one degree or more)?
- What can be learnt from the experiences and characteristics of these ‘successful’ women?

These sub-questions address the substantive issues of how some women became ‘successful’ in terms of gaining one or more university degrees, how they explain this and what can be learned from their accounts. This has implications for generating knowledge for understanding of the substantive field (Poulson and Wallace 2004) and may help to inform practice in the field of Careers Education and Guidance. The questions aim to contribute to the development and refinement of theoretical understanding of social reproduction in non-Western contexts, specifically in relation to women. They also allow me to test the applicability of Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory and forms of capital, with particular reference to cultural capital.

4.1 How have other researchers investigated Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory?

Following on from the literature review in the previous chapter, empirical researchers testing Bourdieu’s cultural capital theory have, for the most part, used survey questions that measure parental and/or student participation in education. These have included the educational effects of unequal socio-economic status and student’s cultural capital (DiMaggio and Mohr 1985; DiMaggio 1982; Dumais 2002; Roe 1983; Moss 2005), or attendance and non-attendance at high culture events to see if this has a positive relationship with educational outcomes such as degree attainment (Kalmijn and Kraaykamp 1996; De Graff 1989; De Graff 1988). For example, Moss (2005) conducted a small-scale study of the effect of socio-economic background upon graduate level achievement using quantitative measures via one hundred and thirteen questionnaires. Little information is provided regarding how or why this process happens due to the research design; a qualitative approach would be needed to obtain this type of data. In relation to my research, a quantitative approach would not answer my research questions. In contrast, Hodkinson and Sparkes (1993; 1994; 1995), Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder (2002) and Reay (1997; 1998) begin to address the hows and whys of social reproduction. Reay (1997), for instance, worked with the notion of habitus as both embodied and as a complex interplay between past and present through the use of a case study of a once working-class woman who now “...identifies as middle class...” whilst Rapoport and Lomsky-Feder (2002) studied life history interviews to examine how habitus is inculcated and transformed in the context of Russian Jewish migration in Israel.

Leading on from this, the next section explains why I specifically chose life history approach to answer my research questions.

4.2 Why I chose to conduct life history research to answer my substantive questions

The methodology chosen has been influenced by my views on ontology, methodology and epistemology, i.e. how I feel research should be conducted (Harding 1987), what is valid knowledge and what represents knowledge itself. This qualitative social research aims to make sense of the complexities and the dilemmas of the women's lives. My methodological deliberations were influenced by a feminist philosophy; as the work is political, methodological concerns are personal, ontological, epistemological, social and political arguments. These principles affected the empirical knowledge sought and produced and the theoretical knowledge it developed through interpretation and analysis, adding to the existing body of knowledge in this area, following the literature review.

Goodson and Sikes (2001 p1) argue that life history research examines how individuals talk about and story their experiences and perceptions of the social world they inhabit. It allows people to reconstruct the past through the narration of their life stories. Life stories are the starting point of life histories despite being removed from life experiences and so represent a person's interpretation of their life (Goodson and Sikes 2001 p16). They are also retrospective as they aims to achieve a better understanding of the past in order to acquire possibilities for the future. Such questions as "Who are you? What are you? Why are you? Why do you think, believe, do, make sense of the world and the things that happen to you, as you do? Why have these particular things happened to you? Why has your life taken the course that it has? Where is it likely to go?" may be addressed (Goodson and Sikes 2001 p1). The present as well as the respondent's understanding of the present, affect their story of the past. For example, the past impacts on the present, though not usually in a straightforwardly deterministic way. The past can enable and restrict the present and future choices, but the past also affects the way the present is understood.

Goodson (1992 page 6) suggests that the crucial focus for life history work is to locate life stories alongside the broader contextual analysis, that is to tell a story of action within a theory of context. He argues that the distinction between life history and life story is absolutely basic – that life story is the story we tell about our life and life history is the life story located within its historical context. Whilst life stories are an interpretation and selection of a person's own life, the transformation into life history adds a further interpretive layer (Goodson and Sikes 2001 p16). The crucial stage in life history is the transformation of life stories, gained from interviews (the

primary source of data collection), into life histories. This involves a move to account for the historical and social context and according to Goodson and Sikes (p17) can represent a 'dangerous move' as it offers researchers considerable colonising power to locate life story with all its selections, shifts and silences. The social histories and social geographies in which life histories are embedded are also important. Part of the task of transforming life stories into life histories is to make visible the ways in which life stories are a mediation between the personal voice and wider cultural and political imperatives.

One strength of life history research is its ability to allow groups who are not always well represented to be heard. It also provides information in greater depth than most other methods. The approach is a contextual method. Such contexts are not just the environments people live in, they are "...crucial interactive relationship between individuals' lives, their perceptions and experiences, and historical and social contexts and events..." (Goodson and Sikes 2001 p2). Contextualisation can deal with questions about structure and agency as well as opportunities for action in different fields (Bourdieu 1977) or social milieus. It involves a mediation between the personal voice and wider cultural and political issues.

Life history interviews differ from semi-structured or unstructured interviews because they provide a fuller view of educational experiences and successes over time whilst incorporating the broader aspects of these women's lives, such as their families and wider socio-political issues. Their stories are not just personal stories and narratives, they are interpreted against, for example, social structures.

Bourdieu explains family habitus as a system of dispositions, expectations and unconscious practices which collectively represents the 'embodied history' of the family. Therefore, a life history approach is a particularly suitable way of trying to understand this as this research is aiming to look at not only why the women think they have been successful and their experiences in education, but how they rationalise these experiences and fit them within a longer term view of how they live their lives within a family context and a particular social and political formation. It also allows the women, through their narrative accounts, to highlight the incidents that they identify as salient.

In the spirit of feminist research, I chose to question the 'taken for granted', particularly in relation to dichotomies relating to knowing such as objectivity/subjectivity (Rich 2001). The purpose of my research was to explore women's lives, to find out what influenced their education.

To this end I collected data through life history interviews, an approach that has a deep affinity with education (hooks 1995; Goodson 1983) and is compatible with case studies which are strong in reality as they strive to find out what it is like to be in a particular situation (Cohen et al 2001).

Although there are no specifically feminist methods or superior approaches, the life history interviews helped me to understand and explore elements of women's lives. It was an approach that was sensitive to their multifaceted lives in their social context. Due to the scope of this study, the life histories were limited to certain aspects of the women's lives; as life histories need not cover the life span and all its aspects (Bertaux 1981).

The simplicity of a life history methodology (as opposed to a research style that aims to gather large-scale, context free, objective data) allowed me to concentrate on interpretation rather than data collection. In comparison to a large-scale quantitative study, once my interview questions were clarified and once the respondents were obtained, data collection was relatively straightforward, albeit time consuming. The research was unrestricted in the sense that I had no hypothesis to prove or disprove, therefore, open-ended questions were used. I was, however, searching for data to which notions of cultural capital could be attached.

Life history research allows for the illumination of personal feeling and emotions and has also been known to help with emancipation of the powerless, subordinated or 'ordinary' people (McLaughlin and Tierney 1993). This research helps provide opportunities for the women to share their experiences; it gives them voice (Ribbens 1993; hooks 1995; Savickas 1995) and supports the need for multicultural principles in careers education and guidance where multicultural groups gain voice in the hope of claiming knowledge and power (Savickas 1993).

Through discussions and reflections, themes helped me learn that lives contain conflicts and are "...in continuing interplay with changes in society and its structures..." (Riley 1998). My role was to understand them (Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Oakley 1981). Furthermore, as a practitioner/researcher, I may appreciate their perspectives more easily than a detached researcher (Eisner 1993). In careers guidance practice, narrative methods are still in their infancy although they can help change life cycles and encourage clients to see who they are becoming (Goffman in Plummer 2001), or wish to become, through reflection and re-learning. These women highlighted issues of power struggles in the family and society, whilst sharing their real lives (Goodson and Sikes 2001; Maynard 1994). Through research and practice, this process may impact upon their lives and the lives of others (Colterill and Letherby 1993). It can also promote advocacy and empowerment (Plummer 1995) by enabling women to talk freely about

their feelings and experiences. As the women share how they achieved 'successes', others may be encouraged to follow the same paths.

4.3 Choosing the research participants

After determining the research questions and keeping the focus of the study in my mind, I was in a position to select the cases. The sample was chosen primarily via networking where I met volunteers, (opportunistic and convenience sampling), therefore, there was an expected bias towards women who were working in education, due to my occupation. I could have chosen to interview only women who worked in educational fields, however, this disregarded women in other professions and I felt that their insight would produce a better picture of what helps make 'successful' women. Informal discussions at social or professional occasions enabled me to 'recruit' other participants who were genuinely interested in my research. The women were also found through snowball sampling (one woman suggested another) which may have meant that they were similar in some ways, if they were, for example, friends. Therefore, I also looked for extreme cases (Goodson and Sikes 2001) such as women who had achieved a degree but were not from an affluent family; I tried to maximise what I could learn in the space of time available (Miles and Huberman 1994). One of the selection criteria had to be that the women spoke English as, otherwise, an interpreter would have been needed, with all the implications and complications that this would have brought with it.

The participants were aged between twenty-five and fifty-five at the time of their interview and were Bahraini, although some had a parent from another Arab country. I did not choose the number of participants in advance, instead I stopped when sufficient data had been collected, when saturation occurred, where a number of the women were saying the same things and variations were both accounted for and understood (Morse 1994). Each new life history began to confirm what had been said by the others. Ideally, I would have used intentional, systematic and theoretically guided sampling (Hammersley 1984), however, this was not possible due to, for example, one researcher gathering and processing data. Therefore, some unrepresentativeness is acknowledged.

As a multiple case study, the work is intrinsic because I had an interest in the respondents' lives (Stake 1995). The interviews usually took place in the participants' homes or work places, at their convenience; they lasted between one and two hours each time. I communicated with the women via e-mail and through telephone conversations both before and after the interviews. This

helped when I was transcribing and analysing the data. Each woman was interviewed at least once over a course of a year.

4.4 Data collection

I prepared an introductory brief for the respondents which included areas such as my reasons for researching the chosen area, what I wanted to achieve, my background and how confidentiality would be adhered to. I explained why I wished to tape record the interviews i.e. for transcription purposes and subsequent clarification, and informed them that they may refrain from answering any question, for example, one that made them feel uncomfortable. I thanked them for agreeing to take part and explained that randomly chosen pseudonyms would be used in the report.

I developed open-ended, semi-structured questions linked to my research questions and theoretical concepts of cultural capital in its embodied, institutionalized and objectified states (Bourdieu 1986a). I also linked the interview questions to the notion of critical incidents which helped me compare and contrast the different stories during analysis, for example, their transition from one stage of education to another. This encouraged the gathering of data about emotions through the use of exploratory questions. My pilot study helped me to word questions appropriately due to respondents' feedback. I was aware that successful interviewing is dependent upon the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Plummer 2001). I had to be flexible with my questions and be aware of any areas that the respondents were not comfortable discussing. If I sensed reluctance, I continued onto the next question instead of pushing for an answer. On occasions, I was asked to turn off the dictaphone so that they could share confidential or certain contentious issues 'off the record'. Information disclosed in this way was not used in the report. Further details of issues relating to my interview style can be found in Appendix One (Page131).

The interviews became story telling and fact finding discussions blended with an exploration of personal experiences, feelings and stories, where I used the different sensitizing concepts which provided ideas of what ask; usually this did not follow any linear fashion. On occasions, I scribbled more questions discreetly so I could probe further after they had answered. Answers were often interconnected, for example, stories about their experiences at school were linked to their parents' influences on their education. I reflected on and used their replies as short summaries. This enabled me to confirm or revise my understanding and often instigated additional responses that clarified issues for me.

At the end of the interviews I asked if there were any additional comments that they would like to add that may help me answer my research questions and, on occasions, if they knew of any other Bahraini women who may wish to take part in the study interview. Additional respondents were sometimes found this way.

4.5 Transcription

The interviews were transcribed in full which meant that I had over one hundred and fifty transcribed pages. I transcribed the interviews myself so that I revisited each interview (Goodson and Sikes 2001). Although it is suggested that, for qualitative research, data collection and analysis must occur simultaneously (Glaser and Strauss 1967), in reality, transcribing after each interview allowed me to be reflexive about the interview process and the responses obtained, as well as the questions used. I also had to address my emotionality regarding certain stories during the re-reading. I reflected upon my lived experiences within the focus of the researched accounts (Harding 1987; Stanley and Wise 1983) whilst transcribing. I was also able to consider my plans for analysis as the data built up over many months.

I coded the transcripts in preparation for the analysis, to a degree. I developed codes for such things as educational experiences, qualifications and exposure to the different forms of cultural capital. Coding of the empirical data drew links between the women's life stories and my theoretical concepts. I pondered on the narrative which contained long and in-depth insights. Whilst the stories were all interesting in their own right, they needed to be analyzed, interpreted and understood critically for my research purposes.

4.6 Analysis

“...theory without empirical research is empty, empirical research without theory is blind...”
(Bourdieu 1988a p774-775)

Qualitative research sees life as it is lived as opposed to, for example, setting up experiments to prove or disprove a hypothesis. It attempts to ensure that data and analysis closely reflect what is happening (Cohen et al 2001). Blumer (1969) refers to this as lifting veils which clearly describes my interpreting or meaning making where I used the empirical data to improve understanding; I actively constructed “...a meaningful story out of the data...”, maximizing the benefits of my “...existing experience and insight...” (Hodkinson et al 2005).

As each case study was whole in itself underrepresented but critical incidents proved crucial to understanding the cases (Cohen et al 2001). Although this is an in-depth focused study stressing personal views and experiences, I attempted to balance the analysis of the individuals subjective concerns with public issues by searching for patterns emerge from the collective data (Goodson 1983). I had to be selective and silence some areas of my findings to answer my research questions. I compared the similarities and differences between the women's accounts of their lives, to establish what helped them achieve 'success' in education and, for some, their subsequent career.

My research questions, sensitizing and theoretical concepts guided my analysis; they linked the literature and the stories. The theoretical concepts helped to make sense of and illuminate the biographical data. It is said that Bourdieu's 'big' theories have little empirical elucidation and so my challenge was to make connections between his theories and the data gathered. I aimed for a middle range theory, partly grounded in the data. A structured analysis was inappropriate because I required insight into the content of the narrative as opposed to its structure. I also used categories as opposed to a holistic approach because of the number of stories that were told and issues that influenced the women's experiences. For each interview, I summarised key points in tabular form, so that they were accessible and I was able to compare and contrast the different women's stories. The headings for the table were linked to my research questions, sensitizing concepts (derived from the literature review) and critical incidents. The final table is shown in Appendix Two (page 132). These headings are discussed in Chapter Five (page 56) where I present and evaluate the data.

As the research progressed, Bourdieu's theoretical concepts were explored. This process was similar to theoretical sampling as theory and methodology interrelated, leading to a deeper insight into phenomena. By returning to the data and re-reading it, this allowed for reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 p34) and mirrors a feminist epistemology. This also allowed me to identify additional questions that could not be answered in this small-scale study.

I worked with the theoretical concepts to make links between them and the empirical data. I also examined the data inductively for any other emerging theoretical dimensions that might not have been addressed in the sensitizing concepts derived from Bourdieu's social theory. Practically, I found it was useful to scribble concepts as pictures, maps or diagrams that showed what I saw and felt regarding the women's comparative experiences. This helped me link the different concepts and identify where Bourdieu's theory may well be at play. Semiotics also plays a small part in

analysis. I looked at how frequently words/episodes or events feature in (and across the various) conversations as patterns emerged across the sample.

During the rigorous and critical stage of analysis, I tried to understand the women's social worlds, whilst linking their shared experiences, with the hope of changing and improving Bahraini women's achievement by addressing inequalities. I wanted the findings to inform my practice. Analysis and conceptualization were time consuming due to the amount of reflexivity needed to test Bourdieu's theory. Due to other commitments, time lapsed between opportunities for quality, concentrated analysis. I experienced frustration when I wished to continue working on the data and felt that other commitments intruded as I often had to revisit areas before progressing. I often had to re-read the transcripts in order to conceptualize the data: however, this helped contribute to developing fresh insight into the data.

In summary, at the stage of constructing knowledge, I compared the lives of the women to examine their understanding of 'success' and to identify what enabled them to 'succeed'. The interviews were phenomenological as they were concerned with the women's inner worlds and how the external world is received and interpreted by them (Lifton in Plummer 2001); I began to understand how they lived their lives in their culture. Linked to this, they were subjective as the participants often digressed into relevant, interesting and useful areas. This was possible within the study as this method's flexibility allowed for expression of subjective concerns and experiences (Plummer 2001). Their everyday subjective experiences can be linked to socio-structural relations across time and space, embedded within historic events. The research design was ongoing and was anything but a linear process during its construction (Goodson and Sikes 2001).

4.7 Writing the research report

Writing, reading and re-drafting helped me to link categories and to conceptualize; I discovered new aspects of the topic and the women's relationship to it (Richardson 1994). These drafts encouraged me to question the data and helped me engage with the literature. Although I included the respondent's actual words in the findings, I was concerned about including long sections of transcript material as the women may be identified by a third party. They were all informed that this would be avoided, although one woman said she would not be embarrassed about her real identity being used, regardless of what she describes as her strong views. Although I pondered on following her wishes, I used a pseudonym to help avoid identification so that consistency was adhered to.

Whilst writing the report, I avoided using certain details that may have revealed their identity. To illustrate: I omitted one woman's specific places of work because, due to her open and honest views, it was important that she did not suffer any negative effects in her professional positions.

4.8 Ethical issues

I believe that an empathetic relationship encouraged the participants to reveal highly personal aspects of their lives, sometimes beyond my expectations, maybe even beyond theirs too!

Some of the respondents knew me, to differing degrees, and so presumed, on occasions, that I knew things about them or their views on certain questions. Of course, even if this was the case, I could only use what information was given in the interviews. I had to construct my own understanding of their experiences to ensure that the information I obtained was free from my opinions. I sometimes shared my personal experiences which appeared to initiate rich dialogue and is regarded as good feminist practice (Stanley 1993; Oakley 1981). My interviewer role was highly significant through this process (Denzin 1989).

Interviews can not be seen merely as a place to collect 'objective facts' (Collins 1998) due to their social interactions where multiple dialogues take place between multiple selves; they were influenced by my motives and the motivations of the teller, within their social contexts (Bruner 1987; Linde 1993). On some occasions the respondents appeared to search for and enjoy a therapeutic interaction (Measor and Sikes 1992; Plummer 1995). Due to my counseling experiences and qualifications, whilst trying to stay professional within the context of the study, it was ethically impossible to ignore their indirect request to have their 'problems' listened to. I was responsible for 'stirring up' their problems through my questioning and on one occasion, there was cause to ask them if they wished to terminate the interview or to avoid questions about particular areas. Homan (in Harrison and Stina Lyon 1993) talks about a researcher's morality taking precedent over ethical principles as the subjectivity of the researcher is merged with the subjectivity of a participant. Kelly, Regan and Burton (1995) see that a qualitative researcher's role should involve dealing with participants' emotions, as the interviews may not be a positive experience for some respondents (Maynard 1996). This guidance was adhered to. I used my professional judgment to assess the degree of their distress. I suggested, on one occasion, to seek professional advice regarding their concern. This is a problem of qualitative research due to the fine line between being a concerned, empathetic woman and taking on a therapeutic relationship.

In my professional life I constantly deal with issues of impartiality (Watts 1992; Connolly in Plummer 2001; National Advisory Council for Careers Education and Guidance 1996). Therefore, I was able to transfer these practices to my researcher role. I endeavored to ensure power relations were balanced on the side of the respondents during data collection so that they were emotionally protected to a degree (Finch 1994). I tried to establish a close and equal relationship with the participants which Oakley (1981) says can aid the acquisition of more significant and meaningful data. This balance of power changed slightly during analysis, termed as 'apparatus of truth' by Foucault (1980 p133), where power is thought to be productive; a mechanism which legitimates discursive practices. During analysis I had to construct and interpret events.

4.9 Reliability and validity

"...the validity of any life history lies in its ability to represent the informant's subjective realities, that is to say, his or her definition of the situation..." (Cohen et al 2001, p133).

Regarding reliability and validity, this quantitative study addresses issues of trustworthiness and transparency or replicability; for example, would another researcher following the same procedures produce similar results? They may or may not depending on what the respondents choose to reveal. In addition, the researcher's personal approach may inhibit or encourage different responses and their interpretation may well have a different focus. Therefore, I used the concepts of reliability and validity as ways of making the research robust, by making sure my chosen method and my interview technique were consistent across the sample. As validity ensures the technique actually focuses on the study, this was scrutinized prior to the research through some initial pilot work.

It is suggested that reliability is required before validity (Cohen et al 2001) because reliability is concerned with, for example, respondents being honest and consistent in their answers. In naturalistic research, uniqueness is actually a strength rather than a weakness (Cohen et al 2001). People may tell stories that, for whatever reason, they want the listener to hear (Goodson and Sikes 2001). However, I had to assume that the stories I was told were 'true' (as subjective, personal interpretations of events as opposed to objectively verifiable truths) and that they did not want to deliberately lie (Goodson and Sikes 2001). The women showed interest in the area and were committed to the study. Although memories may seem less clear over time, are multi-layered and sometimes selective (Aldridge 1993), their value to research is considerable (hooks 1995) as telling a life history involves reflecting on experiences. To best answer the research

questions I have used the respondents' words and made sure that the data was socially situated, incorporating their cultural perspectives.

A study that follows feminist principles is said to be plausible if the active voices of women are heard in the research account (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1983), hence my use of thick descriptions (Denzin 1989) that go beyond facts to evoke emotions and feelings, where the women's actual words are documented. This is helped by the inclusion of contextual elements in the final report, such as how and why they chose a particular degree course or particular university (Scofield 1993). For example, the choice of one woman to study for a degree contrasted with decisions made by another woman, as one wished to study for self-fulfillment whilst another pursued a vocational career. A different data collection tool, such as a questionnaire, may not have reflected this full picture because of the lack of interaction between the respondents and myself, as well as the lack of depth in their answers. It is difficult to ask additional questions if the respondents fill in a questionnaire anonymously.

This work supports the practitioner/researcher role, which should not be rigid (Killeen and Watts 1983) or hierarchical. I believe that practitioner/researchers are in a better position to demonstrate what clients need as I engage with them daily, as opposed to being a detached researcher who is not aware of cultural and other influences on educational choices of Bahraini Muslim women and girls. Different answers may have been vocalised by the respondents during interviews conducted by a detached researcher due to their approach, personality and experience. Some things may not have been disclosed because they were not comfortable telling them to me. I wanted the research to be non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian and non-manipulative (Kelly, Regan and Burton 1995) and a learning process for all involved. However, "...it is an illusion to think that, in anything short of a participatory research project, participants can have anything approaching 'equal' knowledge to the researcher..." (Kelly, Regan and Burton 1994 p37).

Measor and Wood (1998) believe that some topics could be difficult for some researchers to study depending on their age or gender, as respondents use the image of the researcher as a basis for response. Therefore, I have revealed my identity and background (Reynolds 1979) so that it is clear to the reader. Blair (1995) found that matching the race of the researcher and the respondent does not necessarily produce more valid data. Initially, I could only hope that the women would share their stories with a thirty-two year old, white, middle-class woman (Scott and Usher 1999). I believe personality and trust are more important than age or gender, as well as an interest in listening to others' stories about their lives (Goodson and Sikes 2001).

Internal validity is concerned with explanations, interpretations and claims being supported by the data to varying degrees depending on the certainty of the claims. I addressed internal validity through the richness, depth and scope of the data and by using the women's words as well as explaining their particular context. This helps to ensure that the claims are plausible and credible, that they are reasonable and can be believed (Hammersley 1987). They also need to be clearly expressed and supported by or challenge existing theory where relevant.

I used respondent validation to ensure the credibility of the work although this is not necessarily a straightforward process. Respondent validation consisted of two stages and took place after transcription, texts of interviews were sent back to the participants to ensure that the transcripts were accurate. On the basis of responses, I corrected factual errors whilst also offering the respondents the opportunity to add to the information obtained (Lincoln and Guba in Cohen et al 2001; Yin 1994) and thus worked as a means of further data gathering. Interviews, telephone calls or e-mail communication were used so that I could clarify certain points during transcription and analysis so that areas they wished to discuss further could be explored. I also provided the respondents with an opportunity to read over my analysis once it was produced. None of the women commented at this stage and, in fact, as the analysis was my interpretation of the data I could only have considered their comments as I was the author of the work. In addition, they may not have liked my interpretation or even understood it, because of the use of specialist language (Denzin 1970). I may have misinterpreted the data (Goodson and Sikes 2001) in their opinion, although the transcribed interviews and analysis did enable them to, in the words of one respondent, "...think about their views..." (Hana). As the respondents' subjectivity contributes to a degree of bias due to their views and perspectives, I view validity "...as a matter of degree rather than an absolute state..." (Gronlund in Cohen et al 2001 p106).

External validity, the degree to which the findings can be generalized to the wider population (Cohen et al 2001), is a contentious issue in this type of research. I was not aiming to generalize the findings widely, but to provide detailed examinations of particular cases, which might be compared and contrasted to those of similar women. I have endeavoured to detail the context of the data (Scofield 1993) as human behaviour is socially situated and unique. Cases can be compared (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Eisenhart and Howe 1992) by looking at the typicality of a participant or a situation. Comparisons can be made between the women from different socio-economic classes of Bahraini women, for example, those that attended private schools appear to share the same norms, culture and outlook on education. This, however, does require a detailed

description of their case and life history for others to decide the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other 'typical' cases. Therefore, the reader is provided with sufficiently rich data to see how and why I reached my interpretation – and also to make their own judgements about other possible interpretations (Lincoln and Guba 1985).

Denzin (1989) actively rejects generalizability, however, this makes theorising and using qualitative research in policy making difficult. The nature of the critical paradigm sees us as being restricted by social factors (Cohen et al 2001), that must be considered and addressed when generalizing, but does not necessarily look for generalizability. It would have been fair to say that their explanations of their unique stories meant that generalizability was not relevant (Plummer 2001). However, I wanted the research to help future Bahraini girls. My job was to ensure that the research was interpreted accurately, that it was a fair representation of what the women meant. MacIntyre (in Bernstein 1983) talks of objective rationality found by transcending rules and knowing when to put them into use. This is a useful device for careers guidance practitioners using research. Regarding content validity, I questioned whether the work covers what it purports to and if it addressed the issues under investigation. I addressed construct validity by endeavouring to define all the terms used (Cohen et al 2001), so that they are meaningful to the reader.

I hope that the research leads to action (catalytic validity) at least at a one-to-one level, and benefits those involved (tactical authenticity) (Cohen et al 2001), where the respondents can move towards a better understanding of themselves and their world (Lather 1986). There are a number of structural and political issues that may need to be addressed for this to occur. Despite this, a number of the respondents felt that the research was thought provoking where they reflected on their decisions. This is a dominant feature of feminist research that Usher (1996) feels should permeate all research. Gardener (Armstrong 1999) talks of a ninth intelligence called emotional intelligence, which I feel needs to be acknowledged and nurtured in the research process. This could help with rediscovering and explore their feelings (Plummer 2001) in relation to decision-making.

4.10 Strengths and limitations of the research design

As a white woman brought up as a Roman Catholic in a working-class background in the U.K., my experiences differed in some ways to these women, however, they are also similar in some respects (Ardener 1978). Due to my personality, approach and background, I had to be aware that there were things that the women did not disclose, because, for example, they were too personal

to either re-live or divulge to a stranger. As explained earlier, on a number of occasions, the women wished to disclose information 'off the record' and so I was asked to switch off the tape recorder whilst they shared information with me that they did not want to be used as data or included in the report. It would have been unethical to include this in the write-up. I often wanted to hear about the many other aspects of the women's lives, however, time did not allow this and I had to stick to answering my research questions.

Stronach and MacLure (1997) see research as interpreting rather than accepting or rejecting knowledge. Therefore, researchers need to justify their knowledge claims (Stanley 1993) so that others can learn from, judge and question their findings. I have had to be selective and choose what to write (Blumer 1969) depending upon my priorities. By prioritising one story over another, it could be said that my choices were chosen for political ends or for my own means. In fact, Fine (1988) sees all researchers as epistemic agents; they choose political and epistemological (and power) stances. Therefore, I documented the conditions of the research as reality is shaped by factors such as my gender, 'race' and cultural background. I believe that I have clearly justified the reasons for the content of the analysis.

My role in the research design, execution and write-up can be seen as problematic where researchers have political agendas (Morrison 1995); however, feelings of empathy and understanding were experienced as I was on the side of the researched. On occasions I needed to avoid macro blindness, by trying to see their whole picture instead of focussing on certain details (Cohen et al 2001). Attempts at standardizing interview questions or the use of questionnaires could have led to invalidity due to the nature of the topic and the aims of the research. In addition, different women chose to talk about different issues and so the interview questions were not always asked in the same order. I kept an eye on possible sources of bias that would have led to the data being invalid; to this end I tried to make sure my questions did not lead the participant's answers. I asked myself what did I want to achieve, what questions did I want to answer and why did I want to know these answers? (Mercer 1998) I wanted to solve some problems; however, I needed to ensure the research was practicable yet also rigorous. This involved compromises related to the range of respondents chosen. I chose depth over breadth to answer the research questions.

Critics may feel that facts should be value free, different researchers should come to the same conclusions after, for example, observing and following rules so that findings provide logical explanations. But we may all interpret differently and we cannot assume that positivist-empiricist

research is unproblematic (Scott and Usher 1999). In its dominant form objectivism sees what is 'out there' as independent of the subjects, hence, knowledge is achieved when a subject mirrors objective reality (Bernstein 1983 p9). Instead, it is important to decentre validity from its traditional position (Scott and Usher 1999) and view it as multiple, partial and with infinite definitions (Lather 1991). This is because complex issues such as emotions can not be accurately mirrored.

I could have used a longitudinal study to see how women's educational and career aspirations manifested themselves over time or a three generational study of mothers and daughters, to see how social reproduction worked in practice. However, these were not possible within the scope of this study due to, for example, time constraints. In addition, I wanted to find out how their experiences can help them and other Bahraini females, therefore, I was happy that some of the women reflected upon and learnt from their experiences; they questioned their educational choices. They also shared wider issues such as how they wish to raise their children and encourage them in their education. Although this work does not provide direct access to social action, I believe it is laying the seeds for Bahraini women to share and learn from other's lives.

Conclusion

This section has justified and critiqued my research design and how it worked in practice. To enable me to defend my conclusions I have made explicit how they were arrived at and on what basis I am making my claims to knowledge (Poulson and Wallace 2003). The following chapter displays the research results by using the research questions and sensitizing concepts as guides. This is followed by a discussion of the findings which are presented by taking one category at a time, and seeing what the different women have chosen to comment on, what is similar and what is different. This will then bring together and elucidate the similarities and differences in the lived stories. On occasions, these categories overlap because lived experiences can not merely be labelled as one category. This is followed in each case by a summary linked to the main research questions. Relevant literature is included where the women's lives reflect or dispute Bourdieu's social reproduction theory. For the data to be fully utilized it includes what the women feel success actually is, as well as how the women have managed the many parts of their lives, such as their families and their careers. Next, I suggest a theory and ways that other Bahraini women can continue in education, if they so wish, as they become skilled at managing the many elements of their lives.

I evaluate the research design in the concluding chapter so that this can inform others who may wish to conduct similar research, as well as for my own purposes.

Chapter Five: The women's narratives, analysis and interpretation

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the data. My sensitizing concepts are used to examine the women's stories whilst I attempt to explain if Bourdieu's social reproduction theory, and specifically the concept of cultural capital in its objectified, embodied and institutionalized forms, helps to clarify how and why these women managed to succeed i.e. gain one or more university degree. I interpret the similarities and differences in their experiences by bringing together their stories and theorizing from the data. This is not grand theory to be generalized widely; instead it provides a coherent and consistent explanation of their educational lives through a series of linked concepts. An explanation of my analytic procedures has been made in Chapter Four.

The following section presents and discusses the women's responses to my interview questions. The process of analysis helped me to explore theory and link concepts to see which episodes of the women's educational experiences were alike and different, to evaluate their significance and to conclude my findings by drawing from the data a theory that explains what helped and hindered the educational successes of these women. A sample transcript can be found in Appendix Three (p130).

5.1 Discussion of the main issues drawn from the data

This section documents the women's responses in turn. I connect the data to my theoretical concepts whilst identifying cultural and other forms of capital that the women were exposed to. The table in Appendix Two (P126) summarizes each woman's responses to my questions so that an overview of their lives can be seen. It also provides background information so that the reader can quickly create a picture of each individual woman.

In each case I look at her occupation, career path, educational qualifications and schooling experiences as well as her parents' occupations. I discuss, with examples, her own and her family's views of the value of education, the forms of cultural and other capitals she appeared to possess during her childhood and schooling and how this was operationalized, if at all. I also document her definitions of 'success'. Finally, I provide a summary of what I have learnt from each case.

The first case, Iman, came from an affluent family and has gained three degrees from prestigious universities.

Iman

Iman describes herself as a self-employed business woman. She owns a boutique and an art gallery in Bahrain but has had a number of professional jobs in her twelve year career. Iman initially studied as an electrical engineer gaining her "...BSc and MSc at a top university in Canada..." and then worked in Bahrain as an electronic engineer for the government. After a few years, she felt that there was no career progression for women in this area as "...men hate to employ women...". Thus, Iman decided to take an MBA in the U.K. After returning to Bahrain she worked as a marketing manager and was headhunted for a position as a portfolio manager in an international bank. This part of her career came to a close when she received pressure from her family, namely her mother and father, who felt that she should spend more time with her husband and her children. She comments that this was "...not so much my decision to leave, I had to leave...". She then worked for a while with her husband in his graphic design company before opening her own businesses. Iman's mother and father played the role of significant others in respect of her education and career, although their influence had positive and negative outcomes; positive for her family but negative with regard to Iman's career. They appear to have encouraged her in her educational and career developments up to a point, but when she became very successful, they wanted her to stop working. So, whilst there is a strong element of cultural and social capital, her parents have controlled how it is used by Iman.

Iman's father was "...the first male engineer in the Gulf..." and even though her mother had a degree, she did not work outside the home as "...she did not need to financially..." and it was felt that her place was to look after her children. Iman's mother gained her degree later in life by visiting Iran "...for long periods of time..." whilst Iman was growing up, which shows that Iman was exposed to institutionalized cultural capital as a child. Iman believes that "...a 'good' mother is a role model..."; she tries to live up to this ideal whilst bringing up her own children.

When asked why she thought her family valued education, she replied "My mother, her Godfather, for example, was a judge... brought from Iraq very like early days of Bahrain where democracy started but when Bahrain belonged to the British... he was brought to set up all the courts... I mean they came from a cultured background. Maybe my parents were brought up in an atmosphere where it was important, expected. It is also an attitude like some children... are hard working and ambitious like I always wanted to be the best ... and I find it difficult for me now because it is very tiring to want to do more things and you are not happy still with what you have achieved...". She explains that it is hard to change the character that is in you (which is similar to

one's habitus) and she believes that "...whatever I studied it is valuable. I can pass it on to my kids...". She sees this as her motherly role, and recognises the value of cultural and social capital by using the phrase, 'passing it on', which indicates that she values education and attempts to reproduce cultural and educational advantage for her children, particularly through the attitude of the family. This is what seems normal and natural to them. With regards to her own children Iman explains "...my eldest, I wanted to teach her everything because I know kids... absorb everything and first time mother will read books and you want to try it on your kids, books on how to read when you are two years and how to be a good mathematician and I had Masha'allah [*thank God*] very bright children...". Iman is an instigator in the production of habitus for her children who have been 'cultured' by her. This mirrors her mother's role where she "...taught us to be ambitious and to achieve...". These views were reproduced in the next generation.

Iman attended government schools "...because there were no private schools at the time..." which implies that she would have attended private schools if they had been available during her school years. This demonstrates possession of economic capital, also evident when she talks of traveling abroad as a child. Her family would have been able to fund her degrees but a government scholarship made things easier for her. She claims that she achieved high grades throughout high school, she was "...always first [*in her*]... class...". Her family instilled in her, from an early age that "...studying is valuable..." and she comments that this is so, "...even if you don't reach your full career potential..." which can be "...the case for women...". Her extended family were all well educated, for example, her "...uncle was a teacher...". Iman is the oldest of four children and she comments that she came "...from a cultured background...", that all her brothers and sisters studied at top universities around the world and that education was seen as important in her family: "...whenever I got a B+ I was punished, education was so important to us, more than anything...". Iman obtained embodied cultural capital and developed a desire to achieve in education and internalized a view of its value. She feels that certain events in her childhood helped her educationally. As a child she visited museums, "...even though we didn't like it we would go, so getting exposed to all those things, it helped...". She talks of objectified cultural capital where her mother collected antiques and artwork and she states that there were many books in her house for her to read. These examples of objectified cultural capital are said to have an educative effect by their mere existence (Bourdieu 2001), although Iman talks of operationalizing this form of capital by reading and learning from the books. She mentions her competitive attitude towards learning, which led her to believe that she would gain one degree or more, this was "...taken for granted, it was just a decision of where and which courses...". This shows how institutionalized cultural capital repeated itself in her generation and was further

enhanced by her attendance at, and credentials from, “...world class...” universities that were highly regarded in the workplace in Bahrain.

Iman feels that success is difficult to define, she explains that “...each woman has her own terms, what I find is successful for me is different from what other women find successful...”. She says that her parents encouraged her to succeed; they “...pushed me but I also think it is my attitude and ambition...”. She always competed with friends and female cousins which she describes as “...tiring...”. Iman seems to draw a distinction between just being ‘normal’ and being ‘successful’. These are subjective terms as clearly Iman’s family’s ideas of ‘normal’ would, to many, appear to be reproducing ‘success’ or advantage be it social, cultural and economic. She stresses the importance of children having high self-esteem and she consciously tries to increase this in her daughters by not “...criticizing them...”. She says that “I always tell my children that they should study something that they like and I feel it is important that they can make money out of it also. I want them to be lawyers or architects... but if one of them wants to be an artist there is more chances now. I don’t want to force them...”. Her comments here show how the embodied cultural capital that she passes onto them, by instilling the importance of education, is also intended to manifest itself as economic, social and symbolic capital, by her children gaining prestigious careers.

A discussion regarding her son’s lack of interest in the Arabic language reconfirms her proactive role in her children’s education (embodied cultural capital). In the next ten years Iman wishes to see her “...kids graduate... [*and*] have successful careers...”. She feels that this will make her “...very happy, I think every mom wants to see that...”. Iman talks of the benefits of teaching women how to juggle the many aspects of their lives but believes that “...women are more skilful than men in managing more things at one time”.

Iman believes that “...we are now more aware of [*career and course*] options... schools they advise them...”. She adds that the Bahrain government should provide careers advice for all its students and should work on improving the government school programmes by, for example, “...letting them (the students) think for themselves...”. She uses Bourdieu’s terminology i.e. “...critical thinking...” to describe how this can happen and explains that she “...finds it strange to see people are not motivated...” to succeed in education. She explains that “...especially in the government school they should introduce new topics in democracy and introduce the parts that women are respected and can work...”. She talks of a government initiative to employ more Bahrainis in the workforce, but she feels that some officials have a different attitude to hers and

so, sometimes she needs to employ people from outside of Bahrain because some Bahrainis "...have an attitude of I don't wanna work.". She added that "...there are a lot of ...girls what you see in shops... it's nice to see that and of course those ones are hard working...". She blames the government, in part, for lack of education and training; she explains that "You can not expect us to employ Bahrainis if they are not prepared... How can we pay so much for foreigners who we bring from outside, we have to close our offices...". This supports her view that the government's education programmes need improving to meet the needs of the market. Iman feels that when she was a student there were "...no good universities in Bahrain..." and this is one of the reasons for her studying abroad, but she adds that "...maybe there are good colleges or universities now...". She states that university fees at a university in Bahrain are now nominal due to government subsidy, which helps students from lower socio-economic groups. Iman's ideas are progressive where she comments that it would be better for women if they could study and work from home. She also explains that "...the husband must be supportive in ... that he allows the woman to do what she wants...".

Although Iman is not following her chosen career path, her academic qualifications have been transformed into economic, social and cultural advantage. She talks of her family's "...name..." helping her set up her businesses and her family's money enabling her ventures. She also says that she is able to send her children to "...private school...", "...teach them values..." and "...how to behave in society..." by culturing them because she works outside the home "...around school hours...". She sees that one of her roles, as a mother, is "...passing on education..." to her children. Cultural capital in its three forms has not only helped her in the field of education but also, to an extent, in the workplace, although she believes that her parent's views, and the fact that she is a woman, have hindered her in this field because "...it is difficult to get promotion in the government sector if you are a woman...".

I now present the findings from my discussions with Aesha who is also from a professional background.

Aesha

Aesha works in the human resources section of an international bank in Bahrain. She is happy in her position and is bringing up her children and so is "...not ambitious in respect of my career...". She feels that her "...time will come...". Aesha's father was an engineer and her mother was a housewife. Most of her family have Bachelors and Masters degrees but her father stands out in her mind as the one who influenced her studies the most because he was a reader, "...he was the

push... he sits with us, talk about education, degrees...". Aesha talked of wanting to make her mother proud. Gaining a degree was expected of her, and that her mother would "...make drinks..." whilst she was studying. Her mother was a form of social support and encouragement but contributes less directly in terms of cultural capital. Her parents highlighted the importance of education and created an awareness of it as forms of social and cultural capital for her. All her brothers and sisters are professionals. However, as she was the first girl in the family, she was not allowed to study out of Bahrain. She comments that this has affected her because she obtained her BA and MA at a university in Bahrain but she struggled with her PhD because she found this course "...very different..." as it required "...more independent study...". Her first and second degrees were paid for by family funding. In addition to her parents, the second "...push..." as she describes it, or the next significant other, was her husband whom she met in Bahrain. She completed her PhD when he returned to the U.K. for his studies. She feels that their marriage has enabled her to "...finish..." her education although the funding required for her PhD was obtained via a bank loan. Whilst studying for her PhD she comments that this would not have been possible without a "...supportive husband, and having a housemaid is an essential thing...". Her husband was a significant other and her housemaid, who was also needed, was acquired through economic capital. Aesha says that she was privileged in respect of being able to have the time, money and the chance to study abroad. Whilst her parents were educated and helped her to achieve educational goals, there was also a tension between this ideology and the more traditional values about the role of women as they did not allow her to study out of Bahrain. However, Aesha's marriage to a man who is more progressive in his attitude towards women, enabled her to achieve her goal; he values his wife's education and ability. For many women marriage can be restrictive, but for Aesha it is liberating in this respect. In addition, having a housemaid is a "...culturally accepted norm..." for the majority of professional families in Bahrain. She feels that if she "...didn't have full-time help, a nanny, I wouldn't have coped..." with "...working outside the home and children...". She also talks of the importance of being able to juggle things in her life such as her work and her family "...but family must come first...".

Aesha was competitive at school which helped her achieve; she was "...always in the top set..." and at home she saw her siblings punished for not being in lower sets. She says that her parents "...supporting her education..." was the key and this was done by a belief in education and its importance passed down from her parents, which is a clear example of embodied cultural capital. She remembers a "...huge book case ... and shelves of books and encyclopedias..." that she was encouraged to look at and learn from. As in the case of Iman, this shows how objectified cultural capital was operationalized. Her father was her role model here but she adds that her Arab

culture is “...about studying...” and that “...your future only depends on your degree and your study...”; she passes this philosophy on to her children.

Regarding educating women in Bahrain, Aesha clarifies that the fees at a certain university are manageable for all “...it’s a ridiculous amount which all Bahraini have access to...”, and that government scholarships help many students. She is aware that Bahrain has an increasing number of female role models as ministers and in the Shura Council (a consultative committee). She adds that there are Sheikhs talking about charity and leadership, in relation to women, but also, “...the King backs women and the Crown Prince’s wife represents Bahrain...”. She believes that there is a need to teach parents about the importance of education and to “...introduce critical thinking to prepare students for life... Some schools are now teaching critical thinking, but it is not usual to question Islam even though, when students go abroad, this is the first thing they are questioned about...”. She learnt about critical thinking whilst studying for her PhD. In comparison, she looked rather disheartened when she talked about some parents asking the university lecturers (in universities in Bahrain) “...why their daughter didn’t get an A as they are paying the fees...” as students should “...take pride [*in*] themselves...”.

Her philosophy on education is that we should “...give them hope within their limits, for some students attending a university in Bahrain is not something they can be proud of [*compared to gaining a degree from a foreign university*] and yet some families won’t send the girls abroad because it is said that they are not mature enough. You see girls are like a glass, once they are scratched, they can never be repaired... girls should have an excellent untarnished reputation otherwise you won’t have a future...” because it will be difficult for them to marry. She thinks that “...some students feel there is no point in them putting in any effort because they are going to be housewives, some feel that studying abroad is weakening the Islamic culture into, let’s say, unacceptable cultural behaviour...”. However, now people are coming to “...realise that women should take part in the world issues and political and other issues... they shouldn’t forget... like me, that my ... family need me first...”. She continues, “...some joke of putting a degree in the kitchen. They’ll be told from their friends and family that you can’t say that although they all believe it...”. She adds that “...educated people are looking for educated people to marry; others, the elite have the money and can get a husband on that attraction...”. Economic and social capital appear to allow people to progress up the social ladder by mixing in “...the right circles...”. She talks of people being “...well connected...” with regards to “...networking...” or making beneficial contacts. Regarding her career she feels that it is “...sometimes important to reduce dreams to

smaller dreams once you have children... [*because*] social and religious barriers are powerful and are key inhibitors to progress for women...”.

Aesha refers to “...interfering with her children’s education...” by contacting their school and encouraging her children to lead and not to follow so that they “...get on in life...”. She talks of women leaders in Islam who worked alongside men “...therefore, women can work in Islam...”. Although marrying early can mean that women may “...not reach their full potential...”, most Bahraini women marry before the age of twenty four (Al Makhlooq 1996) but there is an increasing number who choose not to marry or delay having children in favour of their education and career (Pirzada and Puir 1998).

Aesha talks about culture and says that “In this culture planning ahead is unusual...” and so many people do not think long-term regarding their education and career plans. She adds that travel “...helps you to learn more from other cultures...” and that some Bahrainis are “...totally spoon fed until they leave school they have a driver, they have a cook, they have a maid, somebody still carries ...their bags...”, so how can they “...get the underground... find your own food... wash your own clothes...” at university abroad.

To summarize, Aesha’s significant others were her father, her mother and her husband. She gained support from her mother during her studying and talks of being “...encouraged to read and talk about the stories... because books were important for us...”. She also talks of “...seeing how relatives lived their life in other countries... in different homes... this was a brilliant experience for me...”. Her mother and father encouraged her to gain a degree, but they would not let her study out of Bahrain until she was married because of cultural issues related to a woman’s reputation. Her husband made it possible for her to study for her PhD out of Bahrain. The benefit of having a housemaid was also mentioned. There was evidence of objectified cultural capital in the form of books in her home, institutionalized capital because a number of her extended family had degrees but embodied cultural capital appears to be the key to her educational success because it motivated her: “I needed to get a degree because it was seen as very important, especially to my father... and I understood that it would help me in life...” economically as “...I have a good graduate job that pays well...”. Aesha feels that her career progression will “...come later...” after her children have grown up, therefore, she has delayed her career, for the sake of her children. Finally, Aesha talks of the importance of having female role models for young women in Bahrain so that they can “...have goals to aspire to...”.

I now look at the experiences of Noor who also came from a professional and educated background.

Noor

Noor is the second child of four. Although she trained as a physiotherapist, she is now a business woman and owns two fashion shops. Her father is a business man who gained a diploma later in life. Her mother also has a diploma and worked outside the home “...in education...” whilst also caring for her children. Noor was exposed to institutionalized, objectified and embodied cultural capital through her parent’s behaviour, attitudes and qualifications during her childhood and remembers seeing her father “...working on his studies...”. Noor attended a government school but states that there were no private schools for girls at the time. She gained her degree in Kuwait because there were no physiotherapy courses in Bahrain, but she also studied at home when Kuwait was invaded by Iraq. Her degree was funded by a government scholarship because she attained “...very high grades in school...” but her family would have been able to “...support...” her financially if this was not available, which shows that her family had economic capital. Noor sees studying abroad as a “...a good opportunity to depend on yourself...”. She sees the whole university process and being abroad as a learning experience as it increases “...self esteem...”.

Noor claims that education was encouraged and valued in her family and that she was exposed to a “...variety of books in my house...”; reading was “...the norm...”. This exemplifies objectified cultural capital because Noor used and “...enjoyed looking at all the books...”. Her mother was a great influence on her; she encouraged her “... to get good grades...” and she taught her to be organized and how to manage many things. Her mother was a role model because she “...continued working...”, by choice during Noor’s childhood. Noor has followed suit by managing her own business projects whilst also bringing up her children. Her mother wanted to “...use her brain...” because she was “...happy doing so...”.

For Noor, foreign travel was common. She often visited family and “...important places like religious places...”. Foreign travel is only experienced by the more “...affluent families...” but is seen as a “...good way to learn about the world...”. Noor “...comes from a family that are very close...” and feels that “...family support is the main thing [*that helped her achieve educationally as well as*]... your drive as a woman and finances...”. Her comments show further examples of exposure to embodied cultural capital as a child because her family valued education, but she also talks of wishing to gain financial independence “...this is important so that women are more confident in themselves...”. Noor sees economic independence as empowering for women. She

is aware that it is difficult to continue with education if you do not have financial support “...from your family...” although it was difficult for her to continue her education after marrying because of responsibilities towards “...him and the children...”. This is in stark contrast to Aesha’s experiences. Aesha found that marriage enabled her to succeed at PhD level. Noor wishes to practice physiotherapy again by opening her own practice in Bahrain, however, her husband won’t allow this in this area in case his friends visit her practice and so she has opened other businesses. She explains that “...if you achieve what you want then you are successful... but sometimes this is not always possible...”.

Noor feels that Bahrain should continue to have female role models in government and women who are well educated, however, “...some men don’t like the lady to be better educated... than him...”. She adds that “...my sister-in-law... she had a good position in the bank and when she got to be director of the bank somebody called her and said ‘now you will never find a husband!’... this is their mentality...”, “...it is nice for us to reach high position but in the same way... it is embarrassing for the men ... for him in this society ... he can’t have self-confidence in front of them ... this is life and this is our culture...”. She talks about “...fighting against culture...” saying that if you do “...you will never have a nice life ... you are suffering...”. Noor is glad that she works outside of the home even though she is not using her degree because “...women who sit at home... can’t talk about anything, they don’t know about news...”. She believes that life is harder for a woman “...if you don’t try and work hard in yourself they make fun of you ... women have to compensate for being a woman...” in school and in the workplace. She has made her daughters aware of this by encouraging them to be organised and “...fix their room...”. She says that “...when I repeat my mother’s words, I think that I have the same ideas...”. This is an example of values being reproduced from one generation to the next. It also shows how Noor is reflecting on her actions. Noor explains that in modern Bahraini society four is the average number of children in a family and talks of the practical problems of having bigger families as children now need more in economic and emotional terms, therefore, smaller families are “...better...” so that you have the energy and time to spend with them “...and the money...” to finance them.

With reference to social class, Noor perceives that “...poor people in society don’t complain as much as middle-class and richer people...” about their educational and career achievements. The “...middle-classes complain and want to get the best for their children...” through schooling, because they know more. They are, she says, “...more educated...”. This explains how education can reproduce advantage. It may also be because education was not valued by her family. Noor

feels that boys and girls in Bahrain get the same education, however, some families prioritize and can only afford to put the boys into private schools. She sees private schooling as advantageous and explains that parents "...want their children to mix with the 'right' people and some do not want their children to socialize with the people from the government schools..." which implies that social capital, as well as cultural capital is gained through a private education. Despite this, she explains that one female minister reached her position "...from nothing..."; she was brought up in a poor family. She adds that this woman is not married and that she worked very hard at school and in her job; she implies, on a number of occasions that being single can be an advantage to women who want to "...do well..." in their education and career but this "...depends on the family...". Noor explains that she is fortunate because her husband helps the children with their homework and she states that "...men have changed a lot..." in Bahrain although she doesn't know how this has happened. It is interesting that although her husband helps with the children, her personal aspiration to open her own physiotherapy centre, did not happen due to cultural norms where it would be inappropriate for her to practice her skills upon men, once she was married. Noor chose to put her family responsibilities before her ambition, although she carried on working, just as her mother before her.

In summary, Noor came from a middle-class family who displayed some progressive ideas. In contrast to the experiences of Aesha, Noor was allowed to study in Kuwait. Her parents encouraged her to get "...good grades..." by helping her with her study through their knowledge (institutionalized cultural capital), helping her in business ventures (social and economic capital), through their educational values (embodied cultural capital) and by encouraging her to use books and visit foreign places and religious sites (objectified cultural capital as well as social and economic capital). Noor feels that middle-class families are more assertive in the field of education and that the university process increases students' "...self-esteem...". She believes that children and marriage can restrict a woman's chances of success and that having a smaller family, can help women. Noor reproduced the role of her mother by working outside the home even though there was no economic necessity to do so, but she chose to have only four children so that she had the opportunity to open her own business.

I now present the educational experiences of Fatima who, at twenty five, was the youngest respondent.

Fatima

Fatima is a university lecturer. Her father is a business man who left school at sixteen and worked towards his business diploma part-time. Her mother also has a diploma and worked for seventeen years in a bank but gave up paid work when Fatima's youngest sister was born.

At home Fatima was encouraged to study and attended a private co-educational school in Bahrain. She says that her parents were supportive of her education and that they wanted her to study abroad. She was keen to do this as she enjoyed traveling and "...learning about other cultures...". Her "...educational values..." were passed on from her parents who "...did not have all the opportunities, especially my mother because many courses were not available in Bahrain...". This shows examples of embodied cultural capital where her parents encouraged her "...educational values...". They provided "...financial support..." because the "...fees abroad are expensive...", as economic capital was also needed for her to study abroad. Her family funded her Bachelors and Masters degree in the U.K. but she is awaiting a scholarship from her employers for her PhD. Fatima feels that she was influenced by her father who she was able to talk to as "...a child and an adult...". She explains that this is quite modern because "...in the older generations you can't argue with your father...". She also remembers her mother and father studying whilst she was a child, "...my mama took professional qualifications in the bank...". Also, having a computer and television in the house as well as "...many books..." shows the presence of objectified and embodied cultural capital. She states that she has "...learnt a lot from the television and more recently from the internet...". This shows how objectified cultural capital was consumed and she talks of sharing her knowledge with her children in the future. She believes that "...it is important to do things with kids so that they can see you care about them...". Fatima links a desire to nurture and spend time with her "...future children..." with passing on her knowledge (institutionalized and embodied capital) by instilling her values in them.

Fatima's "...father was a great influence..." on her achievements but she also benefited from discussions with her father's friends about her chosen subject of electronic business for her Masters course and ideas for her PhD. This demonstrates a community interaction model of career theory (Law 1998) as well as evidence of Fatima operationalizing social capital as she was able to work shadow in one of their businesses.

Fatima talks about how she learnt to be a critical thinker at university and during her private education by "...using both sides of the brain and being creative... the killer in every society is the lack of innovation, creativity... young people, they can't think out of the box...". To this end,

she is passionate about introducing these techniques into her teaching at university. She feels that this is an area that is lacking in Bahrain.

Fatima believes that “...most women in Bahrain put their degrees into action...” but that having a family can ruin a woman’s career because she then has different priorities. Also, “...if families can only support one child in an education, then they choose the boys...”. She elucidates this point by saying that “...you get all middle income people who try to send their kids there [*to a private school*] ... not one of them wants to put their kids into state schools because it is seen as not good for them ... but boys they come first...”. She explains how some families are “...not educated to want their children to have an education... poorer students can be ambitious but it is more difficult without money but they can gain funding for their degrees from the government, from the American Embassy and from the British Council, however, [*regarding*] the government, this is for subjects that they need in the future...” and a “...contract must be signed to say that the student will return to Bahrain for employment...”, which shows that the government is structuring their funds to support the needs of Bahrain (Law 1996).

When Fatima returned to Bahrain after her studies she resumed some of her previous responsibilities as an Arab woman by living with her family because this “...must be the way...”. She explains that there were no curfews, however, she did check with her parents “...before traveling and other activities...”. She felt that in the West there are “...more choices and more things going on because it is bigger...” and if women only experience living in “...Bahrain all their life they may not see all the options and things they can do as women...”. Her experiences abroad fuelled her ambition, despite the “...difficulties of Muslim society...”. Fatima sees herself completing a PhD via distance learning because her fiancé does not want to go out of Bahrain for a long time. She says that “...some men ... don’t want a woman to achieve more in education than them ...or having a better position – he would not accept to marry them...”. She also explains that her fiancé is a graduate and that this was not an arranged marriage as such as they were allowed to choose each other, however, “...it would have been difficult for “...him in society...” if he was not a graduate because I have these qualification...”. This mirrors Aesha and Iman’s views that, for some men, having a more qualified wife, can be socially embarrassing.

Fatima sees herself settling down with a family of her own but feels she may be bored staying at home with children. She believes that women today are not satisfied at home, “...if a mother is a role model [*by working out of the home*] you look up to her...”. She explains that “...we cry for equality but I don’t really want equality because after all I wouldn’t want to wash cars, or do what

men [*do*]... women are limited ... in terms of ... physical capacity ... but mentally, I think women can multi-task better than men ... especially in our country ... we have to compensate for being a woman... I think you have to marry...”. She states that “...some men have a higher salary than women for the same job...”, for example, she was offered a position that pays two hundred dinars (approximately three hundred pounds a month) even after gaining her Masters degree from a “...good British university...”. This is because “...within Bahraini society, it is the man who is the bread winner...”. This may mean that institutionalized capital may not work in the same way for economic gain for men and women in Bahrain because there is a cultural view that men should earn more than women because of their responsibilities towards the family. In addition, symbolic capital, such as having a prestigious position, is not seen as “...being as important for women as for men...”. Fatima believes that this view, and social structures, have restricted her opportunities within her workplace, which reflects the views of Iman and Noor.

For Fatima, traveling and studying abroad were ways for Fatima to broaden her horizons. She developed her cultural and social capital through the amount and type of educational experiences she was exposed to. Once she returned to Bahrain she became more aware of the restrictions that were placed upon her as a Muslim daughter. Fatima wants to study abroad at PhD level, however, her “...fiancé will work in Bahrain...” and so it will not be possible to study abroad. She is restricted by the university courses offered in Bahrain despite an influx of international universities opening in the country. As a child she witnessed both her mother and father gaining qualifications (embodied and institutionalized cultural capital). She learnt from the television in her home “...and later the internet...” (objectified cultural capital) as well as through traveling. Fatima mirrors her mother’s roles by working outside the home; as with the case of Noor, Fatima reproduced her mother’s actions. She says that if her family had lacked economic capital, they would have supported their son’s education over their daughters. Fatima feels that a degree works as a form of prestige (social and symbolic capital) and adds that it would be difficult for her to marry a man who was not a graduate as this would be complicated “...especially for him in society...”.

Next, Nadia is a teacher at a private school in Bahrain and was heavily pregnant with her fourth child at the time of the interview.

Nadia

Nadia teaches Arabic to secondary school students. Despite only providing examples of objectified and embodied cultural capital in her stories, Nadia did 'succeed' educationally and she wishes to continue with her graduate education. Her parents' education and experiences were very different from her own. In this sense; by pursuing education, she was breaking the habits of her family history. Nadia's mother did "...not go to right school, they only just go to learn the Qur'an... can read write just, and about knowledge of the religion... about Islam... because her father, he don't agree... to do the school for girls...", possibly because education is not valued as highly by lower and working-class families (Deutsch 1967) and because of her grandfather's traditional values regarding the role of women. Nadia's mother did not work outside the home. Her father was a police man, working as an officer. He left school at the age of fourteen. In contrast, she talks of her passion and ambition to succeed in education and how she wished, at an early age, to achieve a PhD. She has always been interested in psychology and wanted to study this at Masters level when she has "...no more babies...". She talks of how she saw the potential in herself even though her teachers and parents did not encourage her to "...reach my full potential...". She mentions that her family was unable to support her financially through university; she gained a government scholarship for her degree that acted as a critical incident in her life, without it she would not have been able to attend university due to lack of economic capital. She says that "...we have many student... [who are] intelligent but they don't have the chance, money, need to work...". She explains that "...now ... culture our culture is different, now we read, we have television, we have internet ... also in my country Bahrain ... before ... they don't learn, they don't have education...". Now, Bahraini young people are more aware of what is happening in the world and so see and expect more academically and materially, "...such as computers...". Nadia believes that now Bahraini students are receiving a better education and she "...wants a good education for my [her] children..." and wishes, to this end, to "...put them into a private school..." which is only possible through economic capital. Therefore, she must "...go out of the home to work...". She sees this as being important for her daughter so that she can have a "...more better life..." than her own and so she tells "...her about getting education...". This shows how she is generating a kind of embodied cultural capital, in relation to the importance of education for her daughters and her sons, "...I put my... daughter... to learn Arabic and English private school, I want for them same things...". She talks of buying educational resources such as "...books and a computer for my children...". This shows that she values educational objects (objectified cultural capital) and she wants her children to obtain recognized qualifications "...a degree...". She is instilling in them the importance of institutionalized cultural capital.

Nadia explained that she wants a better education and career for her children and that they can “...study what they wish to do...”. In contrast, her parents felt that educating her, a daughter, was not initially important “...they don’t push for me... I will marry and important to be in the home...”. Somehow, their values were not reproduced, she did not go along with her expected habitus, the aspects of social reproduction that she was expected to internalize. Despite her lack of familial cultural capital, Nadia has achieved, to an extent educationally and wishes to continue with education once her children have grown up; her predisposed outcome from childhood did not appear to manifest itself because Nadia wanted a “...different life...” and to seize opportunities. Nadia feels that she is successful to an extent, as a teacher, but that she has not reached her full potential because she has been unable to continue with her studies. Although she wants to obtain a psychology degree in the future, she doesn’t mention economic gain, she merely wishes to study this subject because she has always been interested in it.

Sadly, Nadia feels that she has underachieved due to the responsibilities of being a wife and mother and because there was no economic support for her to carry on in education past her first degree. Therefore, lack of economic capital has restricted her educational successes, in fact, Bourdieu (2001) sees economic capital at the root of all the other types of capital. Unlike Aesha, marriage and having children have limited Nadia’s opportunities. She feels that women “...need... more things to support from our house, our... husband, or my government..., many people... have to change their brain for women to compete with all this work...”. Nadia believes that some members of Bahraini society still hold the view that women are not as intelligent as men.

Nadia works due to lack of economic capital, so that she can, for example, pay for her children’s private education. Therefore, she is displaying the values she places upon a private education (embodied cultural capital). She also says that her “...time [*to complete further study*] will come...” when she “stops having children...”. As in the case of Noor, Nadia was unable to follow complete an undergraduate degree (in psychology) because it was not available in Bahrain at the time and studying abroad was not considered. Despite this, Nadia seized the opportunity of a scholarship from the government to pay for her teaching and English degree. Her professional career is in stark contrast to her mother’s experiences; she was provided with a basic education and did not work outside the home. Nadia believes that her teachers and parents undervalued her “...potential...” and so she nurtured this herself. She says that students in Bahrain now want more from their education as well as more “...possessions...”, they now “...expect more...” due to knowledge from the “...T.V. and the internet...”. Nadia feels women need support at home,

through their husbands and the government and that people's thinking needs to change for women to succeed.

The following is Hana's account of her schooling. Hana's case is unusual as she is not married despite being aged twenty nine.

Hana

Hana works as a Cultural Affairs Specialist at the American Embassy in Bahrain. Her father is a bus driver and her mother is a housewife. Her father finished school aged fourteen years and her mother had no formal education. Hana is one of nine children and lives, with her family, in a village in Bahrain.

Hana attended a government school. She felt that her parents did not value education at this time, however, their views have changed over the years and they now encourage her twelve-year-old sister to study. She says that, her father, in particular felt, "...that education is not of that much importance to a girl...". However, she adds that "It's completely different for my younger sister... I have only one sister... but for her he (her father) wants her to be a doctor, a medical doctor, I mean there's a huge difference...". In contrast, she "...had to struggle to earn my way and get my education..." She explains that the difference is not just in her family's views, "...over the last ten years...it's the whole society as a whole, they, you know, value education now they... want to see their children having good career. Girls are not only now destined to getting married and having children, the whole mentality has changed and I think the main reason is economic because standards of living are going up, life styles are changing, everybody wants a better life...". She adds that people have more expectations and want to do more with their life and for their children to have a better life "...than they did for themselves...". She says that these changes have been influenced by the opening up of the media in Bahrain "...people are starting to open up more, you know... we have all of these channels, internet, I don't know what, so it's the globalization of the whole country...". She also thinks "...the root of it is economic... because if you get a higher education that means you get a well paid job that means a better standard of living, a better lifestyle, a better life over all for you and your children and your family...". This resonates with Nadia's views. In both cases, the women have achieved more in their education and careers than their parents, and have moved to middle-class professions.

Hana studied for her degree in Bahrain following the acquisition of a government scholarship for her fees, books and transportation. She continued onto a Masters degree at the same university

despite this being, once more, against her parent's wishes. At this time they wanted her to marry, her mother pushed for this and she met with suitors for an arranged marriage; "...my mother wanted me to get married and not have university education that I wanted, my father didn't say anything he said it was my choice and maybe because my father saw it this way 'it's your choice', made it easier... I know that my father... [is] desperate to make me get married...". Despite this she chose to continue with her studies and her part-time job teaching at the university. This helped her pay for her Masters degree. She says that "I always wanted to gain, you know, a higher education degree, a PhD even, at that time because I was an outstanding student and although nobody had this view for me, I had it for myself and I worked towards that ...because I wanted to make something of my life. The whole thing had to do with my family and the status of women within my family where they are supported actually by men and in my view the only thing to help me keep that and not be entrapped in it was to be educated and make a living and have a life of my own... even when I was thirteen or fourteen and I worked towards it ...". Hana still feels that there is a view that education is more important for men than women "...although this is changing as well, but still men always have the priority and my father wanted each and every of them [*her brothers and sisters*] to now have a university degree...", his educational values have changed. Gaining a degree was not something all her siblings aspired to, "...it's only me and another brother who have university degrees...".

Hana believes that women have supported men by doing things for them within a Muslim family. Although education has liberated her, she would like to gain full independence. She still lives with her family because it would disgrace them if she lived on her own. With regards to studying abroad, she explained that she would have liked to have ventured out of Bahrain, but this was not economically or socially possible. She believes that, for Bahraini women "...when they go abroad, what happens is ... instead of acquiring new values they stick to their roots because being in a strange land and being a stranger makes you, what do you need? You need something to feel secure with and that is your roots, your values, your customs, your religion...". She says, "I would really like to have my own place and have my own life but nobody can get everything and there are certain things that have to do with the society as a whole...". These ambivalences are indicated in her comments about changing attitudes and modernization, of which she sees education as a key element. Traditional values and roles have, in some respects, made her life more difficult because she talks of fights she has "...gone through... fights are no problem for me, it's the outcome, it's not only on me... it's the way they see my family... who I love and cherish, despite all the differences...". Hana has changed in many ways but despite educational and career

opportunities, certain choices in her life are out of her control, such as her dress and her choice of living accommodation.

Hana's primary teachers acted as significant others by influencing her father's decision to allow her to study past the compulsory age. They spoke to her parents about her continuing onto university "...all of them kind of wanted me to do something with my life ... two packed cars of teachers went to my home to talk to my father into letting me into intermediate level. I really owe a lot to these people, I don't remember them by names... but the gesture of it I really owe it to them...". They explained to her father that she was a very bright student who could do very well if she continued with her education and that she loved to learn. These teachers who teach in the villages "...knew about the hardship that the girls from the villages had...", including poverty and negative social attitudes towards girls' schooling. Her teachers encouraged her studying substantially. Later, she encountered other problems with her studying because she could not help at home as she "...didn't get back until five o'clock in the afternoon..." from university and she was out of the house from seven o'clock in the morning due to the timings of the free bus, paid for by the government. Her socio-economic class did not give her "...much chances..." but that she "...challenged the environment..." that she was born in; she challenged her habitus. She says that now "...education is seen ... as one thing that will make a girl marriageable... she can get a decent job with a decent salary which means she can contribute to the economical expenses...".

Although the Bahrain government does have careers education courses and counseling in their schools, students are led to degrees that are required in the labour market, which follows a person-environment fit model of careers education and guidance (Law 1998). Hana stresses the significance of making parents aware of the importance of education; "...a lot of girls could do much better with their life if they went on with their education and little girls lose their chances, lose the opportunity... because some [*parents*] are still with the old ideas... that's the social class I come from...". In contrast, she believes that her father has encouraged her younger sibling "...my father adapted... his way of treating my sister now, his expectations for her..." are different. It may be that Hana has shown him the value of education, but sadly, the process of Hana achieving her education has caused certain disadvantages as there is a rift between her and her mother "...I don't talk to her much now... there isn't that communication between us...". This is because Hana has not conformed to the 'traditional' role of a Muslim woman from her social class.

Hana did not mention objectified or institutionalized cultural capital in her childhood stories. Her embodied cultural capital, in the form of attitudes and beliefs, was passed on from her teachers as

her parents were actually against her continuing in education, although her father's views changed over time. Hana feels she has benefited from economic independence through her education and subsequent career and she has chosen not to marry, which is unusual for a woman in Bahraini society.

Next, Rehab's stories differ greatly from those of Hana because Rehab was brought up in a professional family who placed great value on education.

Rehab

Rehab works at the American Embassy as an Educational Advisor. Her father was educated in the U.K. and "...studied in England for ten years from like 1961 to 1971, he did like his O Levels and A Levels and his Bachelors...". He now works as a business man. Her mother was a house wife and also has a degree; she was educated in Iran.

Rehab liked school and took part in many extra curricular activities such as the "...Photography Club and the Environmental Club and Volley Ball Team and doing all the fund raising activities...". She was not happy achieving any less than 'A' grades and she felt that both her parents valued education. Her mother was "...pro education..." and at home they had a television in the house, many books and a computer, which are all examples of objectified cultural capital gained through economic capital. She said that she would only send her children to private school and universities abroad, like her parents were able to do for her; "It doesn't matter if I have to take ten thousand loans, I will take those loans and send my kids abroad; they will not study here... because it is a different experience...". Rehab places great value on education and the importance of learning in another country as she "...learnt a lot about society and myself..." when she studied in the U.S. In addition, she would be willing to risk a lot economically creating this perceived advantage for her future children. She says that "...Bahraini people are... loosening up and realizing that you know it's very good for our daughter, to send her abroad and get educated, so I think that is changing but there are some certain families that still would only send their sons and not their daughters...". She sees that many girls from villages want to go out to work and to study "...they're bright and they're intelligent, and they want to go out and work...". However, regarding studying abroad, financial and social factors are their main inhibitors as "...certain families will worry what people think if they send their girl's abroad..." and "...if a father took out a loan, he would probably take his son over his daughter... it's our culture...".

Although Rehab says it is fine for a woman to work and study, she thinks that “The male ego would be reduced if they weren’t the breadwinner...” which resonates with Fatima’s comments. She also says that she “... would want [*a husband*] with at least the same or more qualifications because I want my kids to look up to their father... I would hate my kids to say ‘look at my mother she had a PhD and look at my dad’ ...”. She feels that if a woman is educated then her husband has less control over her, but if a woman is divorced and she has no qualifications, “...what’s she gonna do?”. Therefore, she sees that education “...gives you choices...” and that it is important to finish college and then get married “...this is the best way, when you are young...”.

Rehab talks of the difference between a private and a government education in Bahrain “...if you compare the quality of someone graduating from a private compared to a public school, you can tell the difference, I mean, for example, the level of English... [*in government schools*] is at a disadvantage because when they go to apply for a job... even if they both put down on their C.V., knowledge of English and Arabic, when they go for the interview you can obviously tell who is the better spoken in the English ...”. She adds that “...the government are working to try to strengthen it [*the education system*] and they’re trying to, you know, develop their curriculum...”.

Rehab’s parents influenced her views of education; they instilled in her its importance. They passed on embodied cultural capital by expressing the need to obtain a degree and were able to send her to a private school and U.S. universities because of economic capital. Rehab says that the professions of her family friends influenced her career choices as she developed knowledge of “...real life... examples...” of careers. Therefore, social capital was activated and a community interaction model of career theory influenced her career choices (Law 1998). Rehab refers to a number of issues relating to gender inequality, such as parents paying for their son’s education over their daughters and she says that this “...is not fair...”. This was also mentioned by Fatima, however, Rehab almost contradicts her belief in equality of access by saying that she wants her husband to have equal or better qualifications than hers so that her children “...look up to their father...”. Rehab was exposed to a high degree of cultural and other forms of capital during her childhood and schooling and she wishes to instil her educational values in her own children.

Next, Sara shares her experiences of education and of working, as a woman, in a high position at a university in Bahrain.

Sara

Sara is the Head of a Faculty at a university in Bahrain. Sadly, her mother died when she was a young child; her father works as an engineer. Her father's professional qualifications were gained "...on-the-job...".

As a child she remembers being in the home "...a lot ..." where she spent many hours studying, however, "...in Bahrain the boys have more things that they can do and so they don't always study as much...". She attended a government school and gained a government grant for her "...university undergraduate and Masters degrees...". Her PhD was financed by her employer, the university she works for. She talks of the challenges of gaining her position in the university. She had to "...work [*her*] ... way through to this position which was sometimes difficult because I am a woman...".

Sara believes that education makes you open minded "...because you become more liberal or at least you become more accepting of other people's differences and appreciate more the positive...". She also differentiates between having an education on paper and not being necessarily "...culturally educated or open minded...". She always wanted to learn and read often as a child. There were many books in her house and her father asked her about school, but he didn't have a lot of time because he "...had to work many hours...". Her father's interest in her education shows embodied cultural capital at play. She wanted to please her father who wanted to spend time with her and her siblings because they didn't have a mother. Sara's teachers encouraged her to work hard and gave her the idea to get a degree because she wanted to be like them. This will to succeed is referred to on a number of occasions.

Sara enjoys her work and believes that regarding teaching students "...it's not always their energy rubbing off on you, sometimes it is you, you know, putting energy into them...". She finds that some of the government educated girls attending university "...find it difficult being in the classes with boys..." because this is unfamiliar and sometimes they "...do not want to speak in front of them...". She believes that some of the boys do not work as hard as the girls because of their personality and because women are taught to obey by "...sitting down and listening...".

Regarding studying, she found that taking her higher degrees was difficult because "...time was a problem ... there is so many things you want to be good at that you... end up juggling...". However, she says that if family dynamics are "...in harmony, the woman is more likely to succeed...". Here she talks of her husband supporting her in her job. She believes that women

and men can both do well in their education and careers, but if she marries someone stronger than her, “...maybe he will be... threatened...” by her competition and “...so that’s tricky...”. If she marries someone who is “...weaker she will be seen as the man, you know, the one wearing the pants... it’s not easy being strong and yet still being feminine and finding the time to look good...”.

She feels that success is “...if I put my head on the pillow at night and pat myself on the back and say ‘you should be proud of yourself, you have done a good job’...” In the next ten years she wishes to “...enjoy life and travel and still be able to follow up with my kids...”.

There is some evidence of objectified cultural capital through the mention of books in her childhood home, as well as evidence of embodied cultural capital through her will to succeed, and her teachers’ and father’s interest in her education. Sara portrays a picture of a rather lonely child who entertained herself by “...learning... and sewing...” within her family home. This may have been exacerbated by the fact that she did not have a mother and so no siblings. Sara took opportunities that were presented to her, such as a government scholarship and support from her teachers and employer, in order to gain her educational success.

Next, Mona’s case differs as she gained her degree later in life.

Mona

Mona works part-time as a manager of a hotel. Mona’s degree was gained later in life when she studied business at a university in Bahrain. Her father was unskilled and worked in the hotel industry. Her Indian mother was “...very educated...” although she did not hold any recognized qualifications past the age of fifteen “...she grown up in India and, of course, in that days the Indians was very educated people...”. The importance of education was transferred to Mona who operationalized embodied cultural capital in practice. Mona talks about the generation before her who could not afford to go to university abroad and to gain degrees. “...In those days... students, they had to go to... Kuwait or... Egypt... the ladies was from rich good families ... I don’t think they want a rich husband, they just want to prove that they can be like other ladies which is around the world because they travel much to see lots of places...”. Mona has “...two sister-in-law they left to Beirut in 1935... but they were not rich, it was their Indian mother...”.

Generations of her family before her valued education and some of these women possessed institutionalized cultural capital in the form of educational qualifications and experiences. This is an interesting example of how attitudes, values and cultural knowledge are passed from one

generation to another. I asked her at a later date if the story was the same for the males in her family. She said it was "...better and easier for them, especially to go abroad to study..." because of social values. Economic capital, in the form of wealth, is not the critical issue of social reproduction for Mona. As in the case of Aesha, Mona was provided with social support and assistance from her mother "...my mother, she always encourage me to study...".

Mona believes that having an "...education..." means that "...your income will be better, your situation will be better, your prestige will be better...[*you will have a*] better quality of life...". She believes that if family members attended university then the younger generation will also go because "...this prestige is carried on...". She talks of enjoying school and always reading although there were only a few books in her house because they could not afford them. She borrowed books from the public library; "...most of the girls in that time they was reading because we read those novels in Arabic about romance, love and all these things ... there was no T.V.s ... so when you read your imagination will take you different places...". This lack of objectified cultural capital in the form of books was offset, to some extent, by the provision of public libraries that Mona exploited. In contrast, she says that "...now there is one hundred stations in the T.V. You have internet, you have computers... and these generations, poor or rich, have access to these things...". Contrary to Mona's beliefs, Nadia, for example, who works as a teacher, struggles to provide such things for her children and some families in Bahrain can not afford the 'luxury' of a television.

Mona's mother worked outside the home, out of economic necessity. She remembers her "...mother, she was working so she can not wake me up morning to go school... but I wake up myself because I want to go... these days our kids we put for them everything, ...they go to school not because they like to go to school, because we are sending them to school...". She talks of them not appreciating the education they receive although they now like their teachers. This was not the case during her schooling where there was "...more respect...". She believes that discipline is necessary for "...them to learn...", although she feels that "...private and government schools deal with it in different ways... in private schools... the culture... was different and they hear about London and the States and I think that helped them to go there...". Her children attended private schools and the older ones study at 'top' universities in the U.S. Mona believes that it is "...important that children should be out of the house for a while to make different what they have in Bahrain... they experience different kinds of things, sometimes fear... and there is no father or mother to take care of them... it's part of life to build their personality". Mona values academic qualifications as well as the wider experiences gained from attending university abroad.

Regarding Bahraini women's educational aspirations, Mona explains that "Most of the girls in Bahrain... I can say ninety percent want to... go to higher study, but sometimes there is a situation in Bahrain is very difficult... could be political or could be religion reason, I don't know. One man he married two or three wife. He have five [*children*] from here... and four from there. In the end fifteen to twenty child all wanting to go to school when they are small but when they reach twelve and fourteen, which is a very difficult age for girl or boy, they stop going to school because they see their situation is different from others... With twenty child, you can't afford to put them in even reasonable clothes not high class clothes. You can not afford to pay for them to buy for them a sandwich in school. So when he reach twelve or thirteen he see he is different... so it starts like a revolution on him. He start skipping school. The girls she don't want to go to school because she feel so poor. That financial situation pushed them to leave school... If I was the government or I have the power I'd make the rule not more than four child because we need the quality not the quantity. I can raise four good child... with good study, good education, so they can live their life in happiness... better than I bring ten and ... they be miserable in the end because they don't finish their education".

In Iran, where the Sharia Islamic law is followed, the government pays for the education and health of three children "...they believe any more you bring, you should pay...". Mona talks of Shia's families in Bahrain "...taking permission of the Fakwa or Mufti or Mukhalad... [*similar to Priests*] They ask the Mukhalad what they should do and the Mukhalad tell them anything do it and they will do... for example, they do not do family planning...". She thinks that "...poverty..." is linked to having large families, but that large families are not a result of religious beliefs, in many cases "...it is political... it's benefit for the Mukhalad to have these children because he needs the support of them and he doesn't need educative support because education with this type of ideal will not fit...". Here she refers to the Mukhalad having more people to follow his ideas although "...women and children are suffer..." because of large families and poverty.

With regards to lack of economic capital and a university education, she states that the government provides funding for a university in Bahrain, therefore the fees are now one hundred and fifty or one hundred and twenty dinars (approximately one hundred and eighty pounds) "...so everyone can afford to go. The government is pushing people to study, but I think government make difference between boys and girls in the jobs...". Although all academically able students can attend university upon their merit, Mona believes that this policy is not evident in the workplace.

Mona talks of education bringing women financial independence although “...some husbands they feel jealous if the woman go out and work as she will be independent financially... she will have a right to accept things and don’t accept it...” Therefore, an educated woman who works outside the home has more “...power...”, and choices; she is able to voice her “...own opinions...”. Mona has chosen to work part-time whilst the youngest of her four children is still at school because ‘success’ to her is raising “...good children because children with good education, good behavior, they can make difference...” to the world.

Mona showed no evidence of objectified cultural capital, due to economic hardship as a child because her family could not, for example, afford books in the home. However, the presence of public libraries enabled her to access cultural objects. She was provided with embodied cultural capital from her mother, but neither her mother nor father had institutionalized cultural capital; despite her mother being “...educated...” she held no formal qualifications. In contrast, Mona, achieved a degree “...late in life...” and her eldest children are at ‘good’ universities. Mona values qualifications and this belief has manifested itself as institutionalized and embodied cultural capital that she passes onto her children, through a desire for academic qualifications from prestigious universities.

The following is Dana’s experiences of schooling. In contrast to the stories shared by Mona, Dana’s parents did not initially support her education because she was female.

Dana

Dana works as pharmacist at a private hospital in Bahrain. As a child she wanted to study medicine and her high grades, achieved whilst attending a government school, meant that she was eligible for these courses. She says “...I always wanted to be a doctor. I apply and got reply from Baghdad but then I was the eldest in my family and they didn’t let me to go abroad. I was a girl and young, it was also money and they wanted me to do study soon [*quickly*] and then work so they don’t have to pay more money because I have four brothers and sisters, they need to look after as well, so I didn’t go...”. In contrast, Noor was allowed to study physiotherapy in Kuwait as the course was not offered in Bahrain at the time, Dana explains a number of factors that inhibited her chance of pursuing her chosen career. Lack of economic capital, the geographical location of medical universities, along with the social stigma that would be attached to her attending a university abroad as a young girl, meant that she stayed in Bahrain to pursue a related career as a pharmacist. She adds that “...I am lucky because I was little bit good at English

[which was required for the pharmacy course] and it's nearest to my ambition...". Dana was the eldest child which affected her parents' attitudes because, since then, her younger sister has been allowed to study abroad. She talks of her parents' "...attitudes changing with the time and more modern ideas..." once they saw her benefiting from her education. In addition it is "...different for boys sometimes if they wanted to study abroad..." because "...it is easier..." with regards to society's views of what are acceptable behaviours for them. In contrast to Dana's high ambitions and achievements, neither her mother nor her father continued in education past the age of fourteen. Her mother worked as a housewife and her father as a Mason.

As in the case of Aesha, Dana was supported by her husband, who encouraged her to apply for her present position that was a promotion, "...he said 'why you don't apply... [as it was a] 'good job and a good company' ...". Her husband does not have a degree but holds professional qualifications gained whilst working in the petroleum industry.

Dana talks of enjoying school and not wanting the same life that her mother had "...working in the home and looking after children...". Dana stresses the importance of giving her own children time and having fewer children to enable this to happen. She wanted to "...take up the chances that were offered..." and encourage her "...children to do the same...". She has actively chosen to break the cycle of social reproduction by not replicating her own mother's traditional role which was possible due to her husband's progressive ideas that have allowed her to "...enjoy working outside of my home...". Regarding her own children, Dana has "...struggled [*financially*] to send them to private school..." as she believes that this will give them "...more chances to get a good education when they are given a challenge...". This shows that she values education and has passed on embodied cultural capital by making sacrifices for her children to have "...good..." schooling, which is in her opinion, a private education. Although her parents were unable to buy her books and even "...argued about sending [*her*] to school..." past the required statutory age, she saw education as emancipatory, a way to "...a better life...". She says that she "...always loved... learning and my teachers helped me a lot..." and she feels that "...it is the same for my daughter..." who also likes school.

Dana states that when she receives promotion, she will feel "...success..." but adds that this is difficult because as a Bahraini and "...as woman..." she receives less pay than an overseas worker even if she is more qualified. Gender inequality within the workplace was also mentioned by Fatima who had worked in a government organization, therefore, inequality has been experienced in the public and private sectors.

Dana wants all her children to “...do well in their education...” and so is passing on embodied cultural capital whilst also providing objectified cultural capital for them by, for example, “...having a computer for them to look on the internet...” at home. This was also seen as important by Nadia. Dana adds that she “...keeps up to date with modern things on the internet...” and her children “...see her learning...”, which reinforces her educational values. There was no mention of objectified or institutionalized cultural capital, possibly because of her family’s lack of economic capital. She does, however, refer to social capital when she mentions “...talking to my parent’s friends...” about their jobs which influenced her “...ambitions...”. This mirrors Fatima and Rehab’s career learning experience, where a community interaction model of career theory (Law 1998) was instigated through social capital.

The final case, Lola, resonates with the stories of Hana as both women were brought up as members of large families in villages in Bahrain.

Lola

Lola was the eldest of nine children. Her father had a manual trade as a pipe fitter, but also worked as a chef. Her mother was a housewife. In contrast, Lola works as a Senior Educational Advisor for the Ministry of Education. She was the only child who went to university and is working towards her EdD.

At the age of four Lola’s mother registered her at a girl’s school against the father’s wishes. Lola’s mother and grandmother believed that education for girls was important. Her mother “...had a vision for the future and loved us ... she was strong and my grandmother too...”. She remembers that her grandmother encouraged her to learn Arabic (the family’s first language was Persian) and she also provided Lola with a “...teaching of ‘culture’ and traditions... we learnt a great deal about culture...”. This demonstrates her mother and grandmother’s educational values and ways in which embodied cultural capital and social capital were passed onto Lola as a child. In contrast, her father believed that an education was “...not useful for a woman...”. Despite this, Lola attended a government school and continued with her education until degree level.

Lola talks of her uncle being another significant person in her life. She comments that he “...had a T.V...” and that she enjoyed visiting his family so that she could watch it and learn about “...things that were happening in the world...”, although broadcasts were censored at that time. Her aunt and uncle were “...very modern and his wife had high heels and make-up...” which

demonstrated a “...strong character...” at that time in a Muslim country. Here, Lola was exposed to objectified cultural capital through their television that she learnt from. Her uncle took her on outings with his family and she “...lived with them for a while...” because her mother did not have a lot of time to spend with her children “...despite a desire to do so...”. This echoes Mona’s view that parents of children in large families, defined as having more than four children, are unable to give all their children enough time. Lola was responsible for “...caring for the other children...”, her siblings, and there was evidence of economic hardship where her mother “...has to cut meat thin so we could all share...”. Her mother was described as “...suffering, trying to cope...”.

From a young age, Lola wanted to succeed so that her life did not mirror that of her mother’s. As a child Lola used to read newspapers that food was wrapped in or those that she found in the street. She would “...sit in the street for hours... reading every bit of the paper and then I would get into trouble... members of the family wanted me to stop reading...” because she was not helping in the home. Lola achieved high grades and was the first in her family to continue into higher education. She “...did a summer course to finish [*university*] early and I always had plans ahead of time and got all A [*grades*]...”. Her access to higher education was made possible through government scholarships for her first two degrees. Lola studied for a Bachelors degree in English and education in Bahrain, a Masters degree in English and the Curriculum in the U.S. Although foreign study was enabled due to her husband studying abroad at the same time, unfortunate circumstances related to her husband’s health, meant that she did not complete her PhD in the U.S., however, she is presently studying for her EdD by distance learning through a U.K. university. The fees are being provided by the Bahrain government as she is a public sector worker. Lola has been supported by her husband during her studies and career and there was evidence of him having progressive ideas; “...he wanted to ‘date’ me but no because my family were conservative and so I got married...”. Previously, she delayed marriage by refusing arranged marriages so that she could continue with her studies.

Lola sees that achieving high grades and gaining scholarships are critical incidents in her life because without these “...I would not have been studying more...” due to lack of economic capital. Despite Iman saying that there is gender inequality with regards to pay and promotional opportunities for women within the public sector, Lola’s individual case contradicts this because she is in a high position and has also been supported in her studies with regards to fees and “...leave to visit university...”.

Lola felt that studying abroad was “...overwhelming, being in an international setting with different attitudes and they had better skills and knowledge, more confidence...”. She adds that regarding her early education “...we were spoon fed but now we need to evaluate, analyze and think critically, I was not used to this...” and yet she feels that she is using these skills “...more and more...”. She had to change her “...attitude and behaviour...” (Bourdieu 2001). Furthermore, she adds that “...private school graduates [*in Bahrain*] will do better as, in state schools they are polite and less critical... we thought of critical as only negative and some think that the teacher should say everything, elicit information but a global society needs these skills ... the private sector emphasizes these skills...”. Sadly, Lola says that she actually wanted to get a law degree and then work in Bahrain as a lawyer, however, although her father came around to the idea of her studying to some extent, he believed that it would be impossible “...trying to get a job in Bahrain as a woman with a law degree...”. Although it may have been difficult, she says that she would have been prepared for the challenge.

For Lola success is “...learning and using that knowledge...”. She comments that this is why she has continued in education. She hopes that she can use her EdD “...in my work...” although she has to follow certain procedures which mean that she is not always using her knowledge. She says that the things that helped her achieve her educational success were her motivation to succeed and the idea that she should aim high. It appears that embodied cultural capital was passed onto her via her mother and grandmother; this may be where her aspirations were fueled. She comments that it is important to have women as role models in Bahrain and names a few of them. She also says that it is important for the government to “...continue providing scholarships for needy students...” but that they should also be available for those who “...want to do well at school...” even if they are not necessarily “...the best in the class...” because “...only very able students get scholarships...”.

Lola was provided with some embodied cultural capital from her mother, grandmother and uncle in the form of educational values and encouragement. Her uncle influenced her through his ‘modern’ ideas. There was no evidence of having any institutionalized cultural capital in her family although some objectified cultural capital was evident through the television that she “...learnt from...” at her uncle’s house. Lola appears to have broken away from her family’s traditions, aided by positive critical incidents such as receiving government scholarships as well as her ‘push’ to “...aim high...”. The importance of education being instilled by her mother and grandmother, along with her innate ability, enabled her to succeed both educationally and in her career. In addition, as with Aesha’s case, Lola’s husband enabled her to study abroad. Despite

her achievements, in contrast to the cases of Dana and Hana, Lola's siblings did not follow her footsteps due to personal and social factors connected to her father's sporadic periods in employment which lead to further economic hardship for the family, which suggests the primacy of economic capital over other forms. None of them carried on in education past the age of sixteen, mainly because the family needed them to work for money. They were all exposed to the same cultural capital, but only she operationalized it. She feels that she was "...lucky now... but they had less chances because, later, my father did not always work...". Her personal outlook upon the world and her "...attitude towards education..." influences the way she "...encourages..." her own children to achieve although she mentions that she is unable to send them to the school of her choice because of the "...very high fees...". Ultimately, Lola describes herself as being "...hyperactive and mature..." and her "...curious personality..." gave her a belief in change from a young age.

In this section I have attempted to analyze what the women's stories in such a way as to indicate the different forms of cultural capital available to them during their childhood and schooling. The following section compares and contrasts the women's stories to see if there are common characteristics or experiences that helped or hindered their 'successes'. I refer to my theoretical concepts and my research questions whilst analyzing the cases and look at how their cultural capital was operationalized.

5.2 Discussion of the key issues and concepts

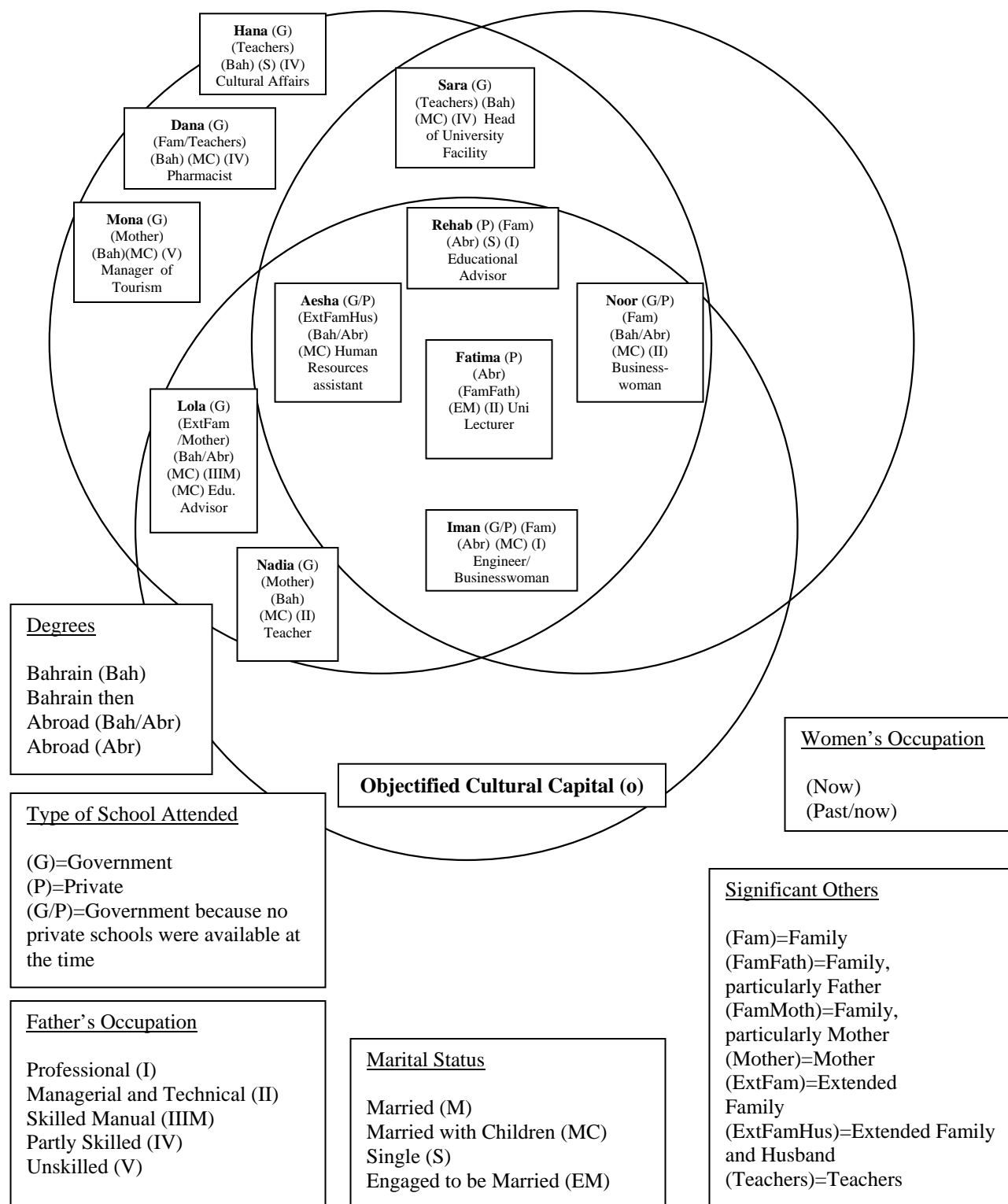
This section addresses patterns in the women's stories regarding their exposure to cultural capital, as a resource, and other areas that they have identified as important. Firstly, I diagrammatically display patterns of the three forms of cultural capital and compare such things as the experiences of women from less affluent families as a group to those of the middle-class women. I compare what they felt enabled them to succeed and discuss commonalities and difference regarding their experiences and views of equality of opportunity regarding gender roles and social class. This encompasses their personality traits and experiences of employment outside the home, areas that the women mentioned specifically in their interviews. I discuss the role of significant others by explaining how these people helped or hindered their successes and compare critical incidents in their lives. This section also identifies what can be learnt by these women, other women and girls and myself as a practitioner/researcher, by sharing life histories.

The following diagram clarifies overall patterns (Miles and Huberman 1994) concerning the forms of cultural capital the women possessed, their schooling and significant others in their lives that positively influenced their 'successes'.

The Forms of Cultural Capital that the Women Were Exposed to During their Schooling, the Type of School they Attended and the People or Significant Others that Influenced Their Success

Embodied Cultural Capital (e)

Institutionalized Cultural Capital (i)



Below I examine the different forms of cultural capital displayed in the table to show how they played a part in educational success.

Forms of Cultural Capital

The diagram displays the women's exposure to the different forms of cultural capital. With regards to embodied cultural capital, Aesha explains that her "...family's view is that the future only depends on your degree...", a view shared by the families of Iman, Noor, Fatima and Rehab who all came from more affluent families. The women were all exposed to institutionalized and objectified cultural capital. It is interesting that Mona, who experienced economic "...struggle..." as a child, was also provided with the view that a degree is essential. Mona's family could not pay for private education due to lack of economic capital and yet, along with all the other women who have children, she has enabled her children to take up the opportunities offered by a "...private education..." because she has climbed the social ladder and so now has more economic capital. A private education is valued by all the women. Lola, for example, says that it provides skills such as "...critical thinking..." that are now needed in the world and in universities.

Those women who possessed embodied cultural capital (Lola, Hana, Dana and Mona) but did not mention other forms of cultural capital, came from lower-class families, attended government single sex schools and did not always obtain their embodied cultural capital from their family. For Hana the "...value of education..." was passed onto her via her teachers who convinced her father to let her stay on at school. Dana and Sara also mentions their teachers as significant others. Sara's father gained professional qualifications on-the-job, therefore, she was exposed to both embodied and institutionalized cultural capital, hence her position on the diagram. The same applied to Fatima whose mother had professional qualifications in banking. Nadia's case stands out because, although her father was a manager, she was not exposed to institutionalized cultural capital as her father left school at fourteen and her mother did not experience any formal schooling.

Embodied cultural capital, in particular, was identified as important for educational success by this sample of women and it is something that all of the women feel that they must pass onto their children. Nadia talks of working outside the home to pay for her children's "...private education..." and Iman says that one of her roles "...as a mother..." is to pass on education and that self-esteem is also required for children to succeed. The women who possessed institutionalized cultural capital appeared to be absorbed into a habitus that meant that they would aspire to obtaining a degree from a "...good university..." (Fatima). With regards to objectified

cultural capital, those who reveal its presence, tended to talk of cultural objects such as books and televisions, for learning. Although Iman's mother collected antiques, she did not refer to these being operationalized in any way, and yet they are said to have an educative effect by their mere existence (Bourdieu 2001). Iman, Nadia, Mona and Dana believe that computers and other examples of objectified cultural capital should be available for their own children. These women have chosen to provide their own children with different experiences and possessions than they themselves were exposed to. Only the women from more affluent families were exposed to institutionalized cultural capital. Finally, Iman, Aesha, Noor, Mona, Dana and Lola all talk of the importance of spending time with their children. This time, along with objectified cultural capital, may only be possible through economic capital where women do not have to work outside the home, or if they have smaller families (Bourdieu 1986a p253).

I now examine the women's differing educational experiences.

Government and Private School Education

The women who mentioned all three forms of cultural capital came from higher socio-economic classes where their fathers were professionals or managerial/technical workers. These women either attended a private school or would have if one had been available in Bahrain at the time of their schooling. All the women link a private education to educational or career 'success', however, a private education can only be gained through the possession of economic capital in Bahrain. All the women talk of the way economic capital can help a girl succeed. They believe that a private education provides children, with a 'better' education for a variety of reasons, for example, it is said to provide autonomy and critical thinking skills (Iman, Aesha and Lola). This resonates with Cookson and Persell's (1986) research where cultural capital is said to be alive in the curriculum of 'elite schools' and so these students have an advantage over other students. Despite this, nine of the eleven women managed to 'succeed' in their education by attending government schools. Apart from Rehab and Fatima, the other women gained government scholarships for their undergraduate education; this critical incident and catalyst in their lives enabled those who did not possess economic capital to continue in education. Policies of the Bahrain government encourage meritocracy which appears to be working with regard to higher education for this sample of women, although scholarships are provided to 'able' students despite their social class i.e. students whose families can afford university fees also receive scholarships. My findings mirror those of Ryan and Sackrey (1996), because women who attended government schools, specifically those from the lower socio-economic group, felt it was sometimes difficult to fit into the culture of their universities, especially if they studied out of Bahrain. Lola found it

difficult to think critically. In contrast, Hana talks of being academically liberated from her socio-economic origins (Moss 2005) as she found it difficult to make conversations with her old school friends who are not at the “...same intellectual level...”.

Next, I analyze the role significant others have played in the women’s lives.

Significant Others

Significant others, such as parents, are important people in the women’s lives. They appear to contribute to educational success because they instil embodied cultural capital as positive attitudes towards education that schools value and can encourage it to be operationalized. These people have influenced the women’s habitus, their dispositions and behaviours that inform them of how to act within social milieus (Bourdieu 1977). In addition, different social classes demonstrated certain dispositions (Grenfell in Grenfell and James 1998). The women who were exposed to all three forms of cultural capital, who were also from the higher socio-economic groups, talk of both parents passing on embodied cultural capital which resonates with Bourdieu’s view that the amount of cultural capital inherited from one’s family is a function of their socio-economic status (Bourdieu 1994). Fatima mentions her father as a significant other, whilst Noor talks of her “...family especially my parents...”. Lola, Dana and Mona talk of their parents, uncles and grandparents as the ones who encouraged them. It is fair to say that the family is a significant influence on educational success (Streedman 1995) but this is more evident in middle-class families. Aesha talks of the support and help given to her by her husband during her PhD whilst Sara, Dana and Hana mention their teachers as significant others. Their teachers saw them as able and hard-working students which helped motivate them to continue with their education (Di Maggio 1982). Having a significant other who is able to pass on embodied cultural capital, may be a key to educational ‘success’. This research shows that people other than parents have played positive roles as significant others.

There were some contrasting examples of the role that marriage and husbands played for the women. For Aesha and Lola marriage provided a form of support and social freedom from their parental home; social capital, as well as economic capital (or government grants), enabled them to undertake further study abroad. Aesha managed to continue with her PhD by “...juggling...” her responsibilities as a wife and a mother and Lola sees education as “...empowering...” and a key to social mobility or success. In contrast, Fatima, Iman, Nadia and Rehab identified marriage and parenthood as restricting their opportunities. Mona studied for her degree later in life. The views of some of the women’s families on marriage were often in conflict with their own, for example,

Hana did not want to have an arranged marriage and she rebelled by continuing with her Masters degree. The role of a woman, within their family, can influence their educational 'success'. Although bringing up "...good..." (Mona) and "...successful..." (Iman) children is mentioned by the majority of the women as a form of 'success' for mothers, for Hana, education was gained at the expense of her relationship with her mother due to their different outlooks on a woman's role within the family and society. Her mother wanted her to "...marry and have children..." and felt that working outside the home was inappropriate. Hana had to "...fight..." for a chance to study for her higher degree.

I now address the links between 'success', social class and the three forms of cultural capital.

Social Class and Forms of Capital

There appears to be a link between objectified and institutionalized cultural capital where the women who were exposed to one of these tended to be exposed to the other. Taking the women's social class into account (although this has only been based on their fathers' occupations), those with more economic capital talk of all three forms of capital. The exception here is Sara was not exposed to objectified cultural capital. The women in the centre of the diagram, who referred to social capital (Rehab, Noor, Fatima, Aesha and Iman) talk of travelling and visiting museums and religious places of interest (Bourdieu 1984). Their social capital may be due to the circles that their professional or managerial parents worked or socialized in, as they mixed with the 'right' people. It may also be down to their exposure to high culture events such as museums and religious sites, a concept that is relevant in Bahraini society (Fakhro 1990). The term 'high culture' is rather difficult to apply and may need to be redefined with reference to different cultures as Bourdieu's work involved research mainly in France; what constitutes high culture in one place may be different than in another. Bourdieu says that exposure to high culture functions as a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1973) and that those who possess high culture and higher educational achievement share similar behavioural characteristics. Furthermore, these preferred attitudes and behaviours are typically found in middle-class families (Bourdieu 1984 p177). Their economic capital enables them to attend high culture events more easily (Bourdieu 1994) which seems to imply that reproduction may be easier than social mobility due to economic advantage. Museums and religious sites were visited by Iman who came from a middle-class family, whilst she travelled with her family as a child. Travelling appears to be a middle-class norm, possibly due to economic capital. Foreign travel is seen as a way of learning about "culture..." (Iman).

Many of the women comment upon how expansions in the media industry, free press and access to the internet, have broadened the horizons of Bahrainis. Mona mentions that the television and the internet encourage children to achieve more than their parents because they “...want more, they see more things...”. Lola saw the television as a child at her uncle’s home (objectified cultural capital) and its coverage of what “...was happening in the world...” encouraged her to achieve more than her parents; she wished for a better standards of living and saw education as a key. Unfortunately, she now struggles to pay for her children’s private education and so has now experienced a different kind of economic hardship due to higher expectations. The middle-class women referred to kinds of objectified cultural capital, such as books, as if they were available for all, yet Lola and Mona did not have books in their home as children because their parents’ could not afford them.

Those women who appeared to possess the most cultural capital from the information obtained through the interviews were from higher socio-economic classes, for example, Iman, whose father was a professional and whose mother had a degree, talked of books in her house. The books were more than just objects, they were almost a symbol of embodied attitudes that see certain things as important, possibly over others. In addition, Iman visited museums, her mother collected antiques and her parents encouraged her to study. Together, these things show the value placed upon education by Iman’s parents. Iman now has three degrees which is not unusual in her family. In comparison, Sara, from a ‘poor’ family, wanted to succeed in education and has a PhD. She is the first person in her family to receive any higher education and has also achieved a great deal in her career. She worked as a Head of Faculty at a university in Bahrain at the time of the interview, and has been recently promoted to the Dean of her department. This is despite having only embodied cultural capital passed onto her from her teachers and institutionalized cultural capital due to her father’s professional qualifications. As she became ‘successful’ she has obtained symbolic capital and so her predisposed outcome from her childhood did not manifest itself. In comparison, Iman who possessed all three forms of cultural capital, as well as economic and social capital, did not reach her full career “...potential...” due to pressures from her parents to spend more time with her children.

Hana talks of how her parents, especially her mother, found family-school relations difficult (Lareau 1987). They did not initially agree to her continuing in education and she believes that living in a village may restrict a child’s chances because of economic and “...other...” reasons, especially, if parents’ traditional ideas clash with modern ideas or do not fit with the required beliefs and rules of schools. Hana managed to transform her habitus (Bourdieu 1993) and

believes that she has a better relationship with her own children's school because she is "...knowledgeable about education...". Now her father wants all her younger siblings to gain a degree because his educational values have changed, possibly due to social changes in Bahrain influencing him, i.e. the 'field' has changed over time.

The women at the centre of the diagram have all lived up to their parents' expectations and reproduced the educational achievements of mainly their fathers, and in the case of Iman and Fatima, their mothers too. They felt pressured into gaining high grades at school and a degree was expected. Their families provided equipment and materials needed for their education as well as university fees if a scholarship was not available (Fatima). Another factor here, early domestic education, as mentioned by Mona, Rehab, Iman and Noor, is seen as having a positive value in the scholastic market (Bourdieu 2001). This was experienced by different women independent of their social class.

Some of the women, such as Iman, Noor and Aesha travelled or had parents who had experienced other social and cultural contexts. These women shared the same ideas of wanting to study abroad, to see more of the world and experience different "...cultures...". In contrast, Dana stands out here as an unusual case because she did not come from an affluent family like the others, and her chosen course, medicine, was not available in Bahrain at the time, but she was not allowed to study abroad. As a "...young girl..." it was not appropriate for her to leave the family home. She studied pharmacy in Bahrain, seeing this as second best. Other women with the same socio-economic status, i.e. from less privileged families, such as Hana, were more than happy to study for a degree in Bahrain.

There is no clear link between educational 'success' and social class with regard to this sample of women, however, there is a link between social class and where the women studied for their university degrees; the more affluent women studied for their degrees abroad whilst those from lower socio-economic groups tended to study in Bahrain. Social class may impact upon aspirations or views of what can be realistically achieved, which may, in turn, influence degrees of satisfaction with what has been achieved and evaluations of personal 'success'.

I now look at gender issues in order to see how the different women believe they affect educational 'success'.

Gender Issues

Four of the women explain that if a family has financial difficulties, they would pay for their boys' education before that of their girls because the male is the one who must support his family. This mirrors past government initiatives such as the opening of boys' secondary schools eleven years prior to girls' secondary schools (Al Sulaiti 2002). There appears to be a change of attitudes by some of the women in relation to their own children, for example, Dana, Lola and Nadia have chosen to send their children, female and male, to private schools despite "...struggling..." financially (Lola). Nadia mentions that she "...encourages... [her] daughter..." to value education and work hard at school. Therefore, their own children are receiving different educational values than they were exposed to. They see a private education as necessary for their children to "...do well..." (Lola) and they value the success of their daughters and sons alike. In the case of Dana, her parents' attitudes changed over time and as a result they allowed her younger sister to study abroad.

Some of the women feel that having smaller families i.e. only four children, is better for a woman because she can also manage to study or work out of the home. This is discussed in detail by Mona who also feels that the family needs to consider the financial implications of having many children. Six of the women talk of making sure there is enough time given to each child saying that this is not possible if you have many children. Having or using this time is an example of embodied cultural capital which is seen by Bourdieu as a privilege for those, and he mentions mothers specifically (Bourdieu 1986a p253), who do not have to work out of financial necessity as they can, for example, teach their pre-school children at home. Noor explains that it tends to be the woman who looks after the children which mirrors Arnot et al's (2001) research showing that there is a continuing reproduction of patriarchal relations in the family, therefore, the 'normal' divisions of labour within the family appears to be evident in most of these cases in Bahrain (Brown and Lauder 2001). Nadia says she is lucky because her husband helps with the children to a certain extent, although she is responsible for the majority of the housework despite working full-time. Aesha and Noor's husbands also help with their children. Nadia says that she is waiting for 'her time' for studying further, when she has finished bringing up children. In her case, having children has been a hindrance to her educational ambitions although family planning is a decision made between her husband and herself. Fatima's believes that her chances of studying full-time for a PhD is restricted by the fact that her fiancé will not live outside Bahrain and because "...when I am married we will probably start a family...". In contrast, Aesha and Lola were able to continue in their education through the support of their husbands. That this is not "...usual..." (Hana) although within Islam, women are responsible for putting their families

before their own education and career. This is confirmed by many of the women; for example, Iman's parents encouraged her to give up her professional job to care for her family.

With regard to employment outside the home, six of the women (Noor, Nadia, Fatima, Rehab, Iman and Mona) say that some husbands, or men in the workplace, do not like women working, having a better job or education than them because it may disgrace the man (Fakhro 1990). These tensions between traditional attitudes to gender roles and more modern ideas that encourage women to pursue their educational and career aims and take a place in public life are explained by Fatima, Rehab and Iman who talk of the father of the family being shamed socially if his wife has a better job. Traditional values are challenged where, in contrast to her mother, Nadia works out of the home, studied at university and refused arranged marriages. Structural issues such as lack of adequate childcare facilities with regards to quantity and quality were also highlighted as things that needed to be addressed by the government (Nadia) as this tends to be a woman's issue. Her mother looks after her children (with the help of a maid) to allow her to work. She believes that this is not satisfactory; "...my government..." should provide better childcare provisions, although this may contradict traditional Islamic family values. Additional data regarding employment outside the home can be found in Appendix Four (p148).

In summary, for the majority of the women, the main difficulty related to a woman's educational and career 'success' is the amount of time and energy women use for their families. This view was not expressed by all the women (Noor, Hana). I now compare common personality traits of these 'successful' women.

Personality Traits and 'Success'

Many of the women talk about personality traits, such as being competitive, as advantageous with regards to educational achievement. Iman, Aesha, and Noor in particular state that they like to see their children competing to achieve high grades. They try to instil in them a desire for high achievement. Nadia talks of an attitude where she wants to improve herself and all the women mention wanting to learn and working hard at school. These personality traits may explain how embodied cultural capital manifests itself within the educational experiences of these women. It may be possible to educate students about the benefits of educational achievement as a way of helping them reach their full potential. Often these are not just personality traits, they are also examples of where the women have, at a young age, identified and understood social relations and advantage and recognized what is required for 'success' in personal and social terms. For women to feel empowered, such things as self-advocacy and assertiveness training may be useful

as long as the trainers are aware of the women's cultures. Mona believes women should be taught skills such as "...how to manage [*the many*] aspects of their lives...". Sara defines these different roles as their job, their family and so forth and adds that, in addition to her many responsibilities, "...I still have a good social life...".

When asked "...what is educational success?", due to the open-endedness of the question, I obtained diverse responses. For example, Hana sees 'success' as "...having my own place and having my own life...", Nadia says it is "...being proud of what you do..." whereas Rehab aspires to being an Ambassador in the future and Mona wishes to "...raise good children...". Iman, Aesha and Noor believe that 'good' "...career advice... is needed for the next generation of Bahraini girls..." (Noor) to achieve success, and that this should be provided in "...all schools..." as it is "...in private schools...". She adds that the timings of courses for women should be "...more flexible...", therefore accessible, and that the government should provide training to meet the "...needs of the market..." in Bahrain so that women can use their education in the workplace.

Conclusion

This conclusion summarizes the forms of cultural capital the women possessed, how they were used and other factors they felt were significant to their educational 'successes'. It also explains how the life history approach enabled me to answer my research questions and construct knowledge from my findings.

It is fair to say that from these case studies, being exposed to embodied cultural capital somehow helped the women 'succeed'. Unfortunately, due to the scope of this small-scale study, it was not possible to address how embodied and other forms of cultural capital are operationalized in any great depth, despite my desire to do so. This is an area that has little written about it and would be an interesting focus for future research. Objectified and institutionalized cultural capital are mentioned mainly by the more affluent women but because three of the women from lower social classes achieve 'success' despite lacking objectified and economic capital as well as exposure to institutionalized capital, it appears that embodied cultural capital plays a more important role in educational 'success'.

There does not appear to be any link between the number of degrees obtained, degree subjects chosen or types of professions the women have chosen for themselves and the different types of cultural capital they possessed. All of the women, at some stage of their career, have had

managerial or professional jobs and all those from working-class families have moved up the social ladder, therefore, in these cases, education contributes to upward social mobility.

Significant others, for example, where a woman marries a man who had a progressive outlook on life, and critical incidents, usually structural factors such as gaining a scholarship, helped the women achieve educational 'success'. Significant others were present in the lives of all the women and the more affluent women were influenced mainly through their family's values of education. In contrast, those from lower social classes were encouraged by their teachers and other family members. Government scholarships acted as critical incidents, especially for the less affluent women; nine of the eleven women received higher education scholarships because of 'merit' i.e. high grades. This is a significant number although this is much less of a critical incident for the women from higher social class background who stated that their parents would have been able to pay for their degree, if scholarships were not available.

Religious, social and cultural factors, as well as marital status, can help or hinder the educational success of women in Bahrain. These issues incorporate the roles of women within the family and society. Certain personality traits were also evident, for example, on the whole, the women mentioned that they wanted to succeed in education and that they enjoyed learning. The less affluent women talk about wanting to break their habitus (Bourdieu 1993) by trying to do things differently from their parents; for example, not having as many children as their mothers or not marrying or by adopting an active role in their in their own children's education (Reay 1998 p57).

The women appear to prioritize different things at different times in their lives; for example, Aesha, Iman and Noor work part-time because they have young children, although they may not need to work outside the home for economic reasons. In comparison, due to financial necessity, Dana and Nadia now work full-time, even though their children are young. Mona chose to study later in life and worked "...at different times..." whilst raising her children. With regards to studying, it appears that more options, such as part-time and distance learning courses, may prove more accessible to women. This type of study is being complete by Lola, who is working towards her EdD whilst also being in full-time employment. Fatima has also considered such arrangements for her PhD. Good careers advice is seen as vital to "...young girls..." (Iman); this facility is said to be better in private, as opposed to government schools.

Personal choice plays some part in the women's destiny, but social structures, family values and economics appear to be more influential. Some of the women contributed ways that the

government helped them achieve, through scholarships and free buses to university. They also mentioned that future initiatives should include better childcare provisions, equality in the workplace and a widening of educational scholarships. Although the Bahrain Constitution provides for equality and equal opportunities in education and employment, these laws are “...seldom enforced...” in practice (United Nations Development Programme, April 2005), but some Bahraini women do hold high positions in the public and private sectors.

This research shows that learning about lives helps us to learn how identity and agency (how one exerts control over their own life) impact upon learning dispositions, practices and achievements (Biesta et al 2004). Life history is a contextual method and contexts, as well as being the environment that we live in, involve “...a crucial interactive relationship between individual’s lives, their perceptions and experiences, and historical and social contexts and events...” (Goodson and Sikes 2001 p2). Contextualisation deals with questions regarding structure and agency as well as opportunities for action in different fields or social milieus (Bourdieu 1977). This became truly evident in my findings regarding the women’s roles as learner, mother and wife.

The remaining chapter looks at how the research questions have been answered and provides a summary of the main findings. It includes a review of my research design in the hope that it will inform other researchers who wish to study similar topics or use the same research methods. It provides substantiated recommendations for policy and practice that have been drawn from the findings, bearing in mind the size of the sample.

Conclusions and recommendations

In this section I evaluate my research design, examine the extent to which I have answered my research questions and explain how my thesis has made an original and distinctive contribution to the body of knowledge in this area. I also highlight a number of issues that have arisen that may become useful future research agendas and touch briefly upon policy implications. To recap, this research aimed to establish what forms of cultural capital a sample of eleven Bahraini, Muslim women were exposed to during their childhood and schooling and how this cultural capital was used, if at all, in other words, did it influence their educational ‘successes’? I define educational success as attaining one or more university degrees. The data was gathered through life history interviews over a period of one year.

Key arguments shaped by the thesis

This section details the key arguments that I have made in the thesis. I have endeavoured to support the findings with the data provided by the women. The findings supported or challenged the literature reviewed.

The findings reveal that Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory does not apply to all the cases. Five of the eleven women were exposed to relatively low levels of cultural capital, compared to the other six women, but still achieved educational ‘success’ despite their habitus. These women were from less affluent families, often struggled to achieve ‘success’ as they had to engage with a social milieu and its language and values that were not ‘naturally’ familiar to them.

As women, their role within Islam, the amount and type of cultural capital they received, the family, their habitus, their social-class and social structures, can all affect the amount, length of time, type and location of their education. However, the women who only possess embodied cultural capital came from lower socio-economic groups; therefore, social-class, in this sample of women, related to differing amounts of cultural capital where the more affluent member of the sample had more cultural capital. All the women from less affluent social-classes somehow managed to seize opportunities, such as permission from their parents to continue with their education. These critical incidents have enabled the less affluent women, especially, to achieve educational ‘success’.

All the women mention significant others who help nurture their education. These significant others include parents, teachers and members of their extended families. Parents were mentioned more by the women who came from professional or managerial backgrounds, whilst extended

family members and teachers were more likely to be mentioned by those women from lower socio-economic classes. Marriage was liberating for some of the women; but marriage and childrearing inhibited the educational and career progression of other women, regardless of their social class. The women identify a love of learning, a desire to succeed, dedication and a belief in themselves as contributory factors of educational 'success'. These principles are valued in the field of education, but it appears that they need to be nurtured by, for example, supportive teachers and other significant others. In addition, the women mention the necessity to manage the many aspects of their lives; one woman said that it would be useful to teach young girls how to 'multi-task', how to juggle many tasks (and roles) at once, such as those involved with being a mother, a wife and a student. A number of the women felt that women have to compensate for being a woman in the workplace; they explain that they have to work that bit harder to prove their worth and there can be a clash between having a high ranking career and being both feminine and female.

During the course of the research, it became apparent that it was important to address other influences upon the women's decision-making; these became the sensitizing concepts and categories that ordered my analysis and included structural, cultural and religious beliefs, gender issues, social class, modernity and geographical mobility. There is evidence of an expectation, particularly of the families of the women from higher social classes, to study abroad. Social and geographical factors have inhibited some of the other women's chances of pursuing their chosen careers where courses were not available in Bahrain at the time of their study or because their families would not allow them to study abroad. The latter was evident in the lives of some of the women from lower socio-economic groups although their parent's educational values changed over time, possibly because they have seen how their daughters have achieved 'success'. Younger siblings have been allowed to study abroad or encouraged to continue into further or higher education. The women from the lower socio-economic groups stated that they wanted to gain a 'good' education for economic reasons because they wanted independence. These ideals are sometimes developed through influences such as an increase in freedom of speech in the media. It is also believed that, culturally, young boys have more options outside the home than girls, and so girls study more because they are in the home more. Some of the women explain and demonstrated that parents may need to be 'taught' about the benefits of a good education so that they encourage their children to achieve.

There is evidence of meritocracy, where advancement or 'success' is based on the ability to achieve, especially in the cases of the women from the lower social-classes, where they acted

upon critical incidents, such as scholarships, gained through their educational 'merit', i.e. high grades. Structural issues were also identified as important such as widening childcare provision and extending the different formats that courses in Bahrain take by, for example, making courses more accessible to women by changing their timings or formats.

Although there is evidence from these cases, that women from various social-classes can gain high positions in the public and private sectors, on the whole, they feel that, despite 'role models', women are underrepresented at high levels in society. Meritocracy is not working as well in the workplace, despite Bahrain's Constitution that is said to provide for equality and equal opportunities in education and employment. In practice, these laws are "...seldom enforced..." (United Nations Development Programme, April 2005). To this end the Supreme Council For Women's national strategy for advancing of Bahraini women (Bahrain Brief April 2005) is working towards achieving full participation of women in the workforce in leading and decision-making positions in the public and private sectors; reducing stereotypes and eliminating discrimination (United Nations Development Programme April 2005). The women in this sample identify certain obstacles or difficulties regarding educational 'success' and their traditional values as a Muslim woman, for instance, where their family comes before their education and career. On the whole, they believe that this is not the case for Bahraini men.

Despite the size of the sample and its make-up it is fair to say that these women, and possibly other women and girls, can learn from telling their stories and listening to the advice and suggestions of Bahraini women in similar situations. Some of the women interviewed talked of re-learning and reflecting upon what influenced their educational decisions during the interview process. I have also found that sharing experiences can be useful in my practitioner role where girls have talked together about being Muslim and wishing to study at university abroad. By conducting this research and interpreting the findings, I have been able to consider a range of issues related to educational choice for Bahraini women. I have learnt a great deal about the social, cultural and religious issues that affect these choices and I can empathize with the women's concerns. In addition, the findings may be of interest to other practitioners or policy makers working within Bahrain.

I was provided with evidence that the Bahraini government recognizes the benefits of learning from other countries and from its expatriate population by, for example, providing scholarships for Bahrainis to study abroad. This belief is supported by scholarships for 'able' students, so that the future workforce is equipped with cultural capital (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). These

experiences develop generic and specific skills such as language and technology (Altbach et al 1985) that are necessary for a country to operate in a global economy; the Bahraini government in this sense, is also increasing the chances of Bahrainis using their education in the workplace. However, there is also evidence that the government needs to encourage long-term planning by, for example, supporting careers education and guidance to prepare its people for the modern developments that it is embracing.

‘Good’ careers education and guidance provisions were referred to as being important during career decision-making. Some of the women felt that careers education and guidance provisions were better in private, as opposed to government, schools although further research would need to be done to assess this by looking at the quality (and quantity) of provisions.

Strengths and limitations of my research design

As Bourdieu (1984) explains, the concept of cultural capital is difficult to measure and a quantitative enquiry may not have answered my research questions because it may not have been possible to analyze the processes and reasons behind the women’s ‘successes’. My qualitative methodology allowed me to discover a general notion of the amount and types of cultural capital the women experienced and, to an extent, how it was utilized. Although I used, for example, their ‘consumption’ of books within the home, the forms of entertainment and their educational values as measures of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984), it could be argued that in these life history interviews the women choose to reveal certain stories over others. However, this can also be the case in surveys or more quantitative approaches. In addition, Bourdieu’s concepts, on occasions, had to be redefined to enable them to be applied to this particular social context. As this process has been justified and explained, other researchers may choose to apply them in similar ways in similar contexts in future research.

The life history method allowed me to acquire the subjective stories of the pasts influencing the present, required to answer my research questions. This approach was a valid method and the findings are supported by the data. A more scientific approach involving standardizing everything in advance (Plummer 2001) may have led to distorted and invalid data. I tried to avoid bias whilst collecting the data and acknowledged that the respondents may have answered what they thought I wanted to hear or may have forgotten elements of their lives. I had to believe that their stories were ‘true’; there was a degree of trust here. In addition, my gender, age, class, race, religion, political, philosophical and individual personal and professional experiences have been detailed in the thesis so that these are clear to the reader because they may have influenced

the data collection and analysis stages of the research. Regarding reliability, the semi-structured interview questions were used consistently across the cases whilst also allowing the respondents to share what was important to them.

Some would argue that reliability and validity can not be applied to this type of work in the same way as they are applied to quantitative studies. Atkinson (1998 p59) explains that “...reliability and validity are not necessarily the appropriate evaluative standards...” for this type of work. My systematic analysis of the data helped to reduce bias where, although I may have valued certain responses over other, this was consistent across the cases. This thesis is, in some respects, my subjective interpretation of their stories; however, I ensured that certain generic interview questions were covered by all the women, whilst also valuing their personal, subjective, responses. I provide ‘thick description’ in the report (Denzin 1989) detailing context and emotions and the women’s own words, so that my interpretations of the data are as transparent as possible.

Due to the number of respondents interviewed (n=11) and the sampling methods chosen (opportunistic, convenience, maximum variation and snowball sampling), regarding external validity, it can not be said that the respondents were representative of the population; however, I did not have generalizability as a main goal because an individual’s life is unique and largely non-generalizable (Cohen et al 2001). I tried to include atypical cases whilst explaining their relationship to the wider population (Plummer 1983). Any low-level generalizations, within the sample, that have been drawn from the data, could be seen as an additional benefit of the research. I have, however, provided the reader with details of the respondents’ descriptions of their lives so that generalizability can be judged. In addition, many (n=6) of the respondents worked in education due to my professional background and my sample selection methods, justified in Chapter Four.

I used respondent validation, which is common practice in qualitative research, to ensure that I had transcribed the data accurately. This also served to provide additional data. In addition, I gave the women the opportunity to comment upon my analysis, although none of them chose to do this. Comments gathered in this way would have been considered although ultimately, the work would remain my interpretation of the findings. Some of the women asked me to elaborate on social reproduction theory and the concept of cultural capital. This appeared to be an appropriate time to do so, as opposed to introducing the concepts before the interviews. Some of the women also expressed the empowering nature of the life history interviews, where they learnt

more about themselves. In fact, some interviews and subsequent discussions became a learning process for the respondents and myself, in this respect.

There was little existing research focusing on Muslim women and education in Bahrain, or indeed in the Gulf and there are implications of comparing research conducted in, for example, the U.K. to Bahrain.

My biggest practical problem was the amount of time that it took to transcribe (then analyze) the findings. I may consider paying for the tapes to be transcribed if I were to conduct similar research again. Despite this, I believe it was beneficial conducting the interviews and then revisiting them whilst typing up the transcripts; I became closer to the data. In the future I would purchase a more sophisticated dictaphone because my old model picked up surrounding sounds which made transcription even slower.

How my thesis has made an original and distinctive contribution to knowledge

This work is original as it addresses issues relating to the educational ‘successes’ of Bahraini Muslim women living in their own country. It involved the transposition, refinement and testing of Bourdieu’s concepts in a different socio-cultural and economic context to that of France and other Western European societies. In cases, concepts had to be developed and redefined. It shows that although transforming one’s habitus is difficult, it is something that can be done where the women were not bound by their habitus as they showed examples of exhibiting agency. This resonates with my experiences of educational achievement where gaining a degree was not the norm in my family and higher education has not been taken for granted, which has been the case for the middle-class women in this study. Regarding the development of theory, this work shows that embodied cultural capital was possessed by all the women and objectified cultural capital, in the form of books was available through certain families as well as through state provisions, i.e. public libraries. Therefore, capitals are not necessarily always obtained from the family.

Bourdieu asserts that educational credentials are only measured in the labour market, but this was not completely the case in this study. In the social and economic context of Bahrain, educational credentials for women had value in different kinds of markets - especially in the marriage market - and are seen as a desirable attribute or commodity for high status women, or for women to enter marriage with a higher status man. Educational credentials are also seen as advantageous in relation to raising and educating children within the family, in line with Islamic principles.

Gender relations in a patriarchal society, especially one in which the Islamic religion is a central part of both state and civil society, are reflected in the division of labour in society and in the

family. Despite this, some women in the study challenged the reproduction of such relations and the division of labour implied. This shows that the role of religion in Bahraini society is very different from that of religion in Bourdieu's context in France where state and religion are separate and the state is secular. Religion is part of the women's habitus and so helps or inhibits women's success educationally. The importance of the role of religion identifies a limitation of using Bourdieu's concepts in relation to the context of Bahrain. In addition, Bourdieu's concepts helped me to define the different social classes because there were clear links between the amount of cultural capital the women from the different classes possessed. Despite this, having cultural capital does not automatically translate into advantage, as it must be put to use, which has been demonstrated especially by the less affluent women.

Cultural capital research, particularly the quantitative-oriented literature, has been criticized due to the lack of clarity regarding its causal mechanisms (Kingston 2001). Lareau and Horvat (1999) explain that many studies have "...identified cultural and social factors that contribute to educational enquiry but have not advanced knowledge of the process whereby social and cultural resources are converted into educational advantage..." (p37). To this end my findings begin to explain how, for example, cultural objects, such as televisions and books have been used by the women in order to improve their learning. It has addressed processes as well as outcomes.

The thesis has generated knowledge for understanding of the substantive topic (Poulson and Wallace 2004) and can inform practice in the field of Careers Education and Guidance where, for example, strategies for and stories of success are shared with similar women and girls. The notion of relations between social class advantage and reproduction still holds despite Bahrain being a very different kind of society with different norms of gender relations and division of labour than the society used in Bourdieu's empirical research.

Further research agendas

Plummer (1983) sees a life history's relationship to the wider population on a continuum of representativeness and non-representativeness. Following on from this idea, there are implications from this study that might be explored further through larger-scale projects. For example, research may involve a larger sample of Bahraini women from lower-class backgrounds, who attended government schools and had a university degree, so that it may be possible to develop a typology that would allow some generalizing to Bahraini women in similar socio-economic groups who also have a university degree. Another suggestion would be a comparative study between those women from lower and higher socio-economic groups that have

continued into higher education. There are obviously still variables within these groups, such as where the women obtained their university degrees (being in Bahrain or abroad), therefore, the continuum, as opposed to merely representative and non-representative ideas of samples, appears to be a sensible idea. Future research agendas arising from this study may have implications for other women and girls in the same or similar cases.

I do not believe that this work fully examined how cultural capital is operationalized. For example, it is difficult to understand and show how objectified cultural capital in the form of antiques, paintings or computers, by their mere existence, can influence educational 'success'. It may have been useful to ask more specific questions regarding the women's views of the presence of these things in their childhood homes. In addition, it would have been useful to conduct a longitudinal research project to see how the women's educational 'successes' manifested themselves in the workplace and were exchanged into economic capital, or other forms of capital, or how cultural capital was operationalized in the lives of the women's own children. Other issues that arose from the research which may be useful future research agendas are: an examination of the experiences of boys and men in their own right or a comparison of their experiences to those of women, the beliefs of young girls (possibly fifteen and sixteen olds who are embarking on further education), single sex and co-educational education in relation to the educational 'successes' of Bahraini girls and boys, underachievers i.e. those women (and men) who 'dropped out' of education and even a comparison of their career achievements to those of educationally 'successful' women (and men). A larger-scale study could incorporate more fully the other forms of capital being social, economic and symbolic capital, as well as the concepts of habitus and symbolic violence as these all interact. A larger-scale study that is cautiously informed by this thesis may be seen as more legitimate by some practitioners and policy makers, but this would need extremely focused research questions. By careful sample selection, a larger sample may provide conclusions that can be transferred to similar women. I avoided 'pomposity' by recognising that I could not derive profound theories from this low-level data (Nisbet and Watt 1984), although multiple case studies, as opposed to single studies do strengthen findings (Yin 1994).

Possible implications for policy

Issues arising from this study or further research in this area may inform policy although external validity needs to be treated with caution; sometimes there are unintended consequences of policies designed to do one thing when generalized to inappropriately wide populations or contexts. As these women identify a belief in themselves as a contributory factor of educational

‘success’, it may be that for them to possess inner-conviction, such things as self-advocacy and assertiveness training will be useful for other women and girls as long as the trainers are aware of the women’s culture. It was suggested that it may be useful to teach young girls how to ‘multi-task’, how to juggle their many tasks (and roles) and also to teach parents about the benefits of a good education for their children.

There is an argument for extending access of government (and other) scholarships and free buses, that act as critical incidents that helped the women, especially those from lower socio-economic groups, achieve their ‘success’. In addition, universities in Bahrain should consider their fee structures because there has been evidence of a fall in higher education applications from underrepresented groups such as those from low income families, since the introduction of tuition fees in, for example, the U.K. (Ball et al 2002). One university in Bahrain does have its fees heavily subsidized by the government; other universities should consider providing scholarships for students, especially those from lower socio-economic groups. The findings that refer to social, religious and cultural difficulties experienced by some Bahraini Muslim women may also be of interest to universities and schools. In addition, a widening of childcare provisions and an extension in the format and timing of courses would allow education to be more accessible to women. Regarding opportunities for women, meritocracy may be more effective if critical incidents that increased the women’s chances of ‘success’, are maintained (Brint 1998). Furthermore, policies of positive discrimination may provide even more women as role models in society; this was stated as something that is lacking in Bahrain. However, this situation has improved in recent years.

Conclusion

I have analyzed the educational and subsequent career ‘successes’ of a small sample of Bahraini, Muslim women and, in doing so, addressed an area that is the concern of organizations in Bahrain, such as the Supreme Council for Women. I was unable to find research of this kind undertaken in Muslim women’s own countries and so this thesis does add to the body of knowledge in this field. It detailed subjective stories shared by the women about their educational experiences; there are, to date, few examples of research that has used this type of research design where the women’s own concerns have become a significant focus.

This work has tested Bourdieu’s concepts empirically within a particular social context and demonstrates that it can be useful to apply Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory and the concept of cultural capital in its three forms, as a way of understanding the processes and outcomes of

educational and subsequent career ‘successes’ of (Bahraini) women. As with the work of other feminists such as Reay (1986; 1995; 1998) and Skeggs (1997), I adopted then adapted Bourdieu’s concepts in relation to education. The main theoretical concepts proved to be useful tools for analysing the data.

The type and amount of cultural capital experienced by these women affects different women in different ways. However, economic capital provides women with more choices regarding their education, although other social factors, such as family values and their habitus, also affect their ‘success’. This research shows that we need to address the ‘big picture’ in order to examine educational success, including the women’s own subjective concerns. In these cases, looking at the concept of cultural capital alone, would not have provided me with the most accurate answers to my research questions.

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Appendix One

Interviews tended to be relaxed and took the form of conversations and although I was somewhat nervous during the first few interviews with practice this passed. I monitored and limited my input to avoid dominating the discussions. When interviews took place in the women's own homes, I felt a great privilege to be accepted into their private lives not only through the content of the discussions, but also by my presence in their homes. I often met their families and shared food or drinks with them. Many of the interviews were interrupted by telephones, husbands and children; all the women appeared to be busy and managing or coping with juggling a number of roles. I empathized with their busy schedules as I too had to juggle many roles during the course of the research, analysis and write-up; I experienced pregnancy, motherhood, in addition to juggling a professional, part-time job, studying and being a wife! I hoped the women recognized my honest interest in their lives and those of other Bahraini women. Some of them thanked me for my interest in the topic area and hoped my research would be useful for future women and girls.

I became aware after listening to the first few tapes, whilst transcribing, that I needed to allow for silence, to enable them to reflect on their answers. I also improved my questioning by avoiding double-barrelled questions which have multiple parts (Plummer 2001). This was balanced against an awareness of their time I was using. My skills improved with practice. I also tried to avoid judging their responses or encouraging certain responses.

I chose to wear smart-casual clothes when interviewing women in their own homes, and smart clothes when I was interviewing at their place of work. I wished to give a professional impression without making the women feel nervous; I tried to create a safe situation in which they could relax and talk easily (Plummer 2001).

The use of narrative, as opposed to structured interviews, broke down power relationships (Colterill and Letherby 1993) as interviews were more like conversations. Symbolic interactionism shows that we tend to act on the basis of how others behave towards us (Van Manen 1990); I was aware of this and tried to make the respondents feel comfortable so that they 'opened up'. Research implies different relationships between people (Scott and Usher 1999). However, I tried to make sure that they did not see me as academically (or otherwise) superior.

Appendix Two

Name and age	Occupation and marital status	Type of school attended	Degree(s), country obtained and funding information – Government scholarship (g) family funded (f) personal funding (p) employer (e)	Socio-economic background from Father's occupation (using U.K. national statistics social class classifications as no Bahraini equivalent is available) plus Mother's occupation
Iman 34	Engineer now Business Woman Married with children	Government (because there were no private schools available at the time) single-sex	BA Electrical Engineering (g) Canada MSc Electrical Engineering (f) Canada MBA (p) U.K.	Father - I Professional (engineer) Mother - has a degree/house wife
Aesha 44	Human Resources Assistant Married with children	Government (because there were no private schools available at the time) single-sex	BA English Literature (f) Bahrain MA English Literature (f) Bahrain PhD English Literature (p) U.K.	Father - I Professional (Engineer) Mother - housewife
Noor 32	Physiotherapist now Business Woman Married with children	Government (because there were no private schools available at the time) single-sex	Physiotherapy (g) Kuwait (and Bahrain during the Gulf war)	Father - II Managerial and Technical (Business Man) Mother – worked outside the home
Fatima 25	University Lecturer Engaged to be married	Private co-educational	BA Graphic Design (f) U.K. MSc Electronic Business (f) U.K.	Father – II Managerial and Technical (Business Man) Mother – Worked in banking and has professional qualifications
Nadia 36	Teacher Married with children	Government single-sex	BA English Language and Arabic (f) Bahrain	Father - II Managerial (manager in the police force), left school at 14 Mother – housewife, no formal schooling apart from learning about Islam
Hana 29	Cultural Affairs Specialist at an Embassy Single	Government single-sex	BA English Language Education MA English Language Studies (g) Bahrain	Father – IV Partly Skilled (upholsterer) Mother – housewife
Rehab 28	Educational Advisor at an Embassy Single	Private co-educational	BA International Business Entrepreneurship USA (f)	Father - I Professional (Business man in Engineering) studied in Bahrain and abroad Mother – housewife, left schooling at 15
Sara 46	Head of a Faculty at a university in Bahrain Married with children	Government single-sex	(g) BA and MSc in Economics Bahrain (e) PhD Bahrain	Father - IV Partly Skilled (works for a petroleum company) Mother – deceased when Sara was a young child
Mona 55	Manager in Tourism Industry and House Wife Married with children	Government single-sex	BA Business (p) Bahrain	Father – V unskilled (working in hotels) Mother - worked in a hospital
Dana 38	Pharmacist Married with children	Government single-sex	Pharmacy degree (g) Bahrain	Father - IV Partly Skilled (Bus driver) Mother - house wife
Lola 32	Senor Educational Advisor Married with children	Government single-sex	BA English and Education (g) Bahrain MA in English Literature (g) USA EdD in International Education (g/e) (in progress) U.K.	Father - III M Skilled Manual (Pipe fitter and Chef) Mother – house wife

Name	Motivations for achieving in Education and problems of 'success'	What is success? What are your dreams?	Evidence of cultural capital in its embodied (e), objectified (o) and institutionalized (i) forms or acknowledgement of lack of cultural capital
Iman	Parents "...pushing..." her to succeed "...whenever I got a B+ I was punished, education was so important to us, more than anything..." attitude and ambition	"...each woman has her own terms, what I find successful for me is different from what other women find successful..."	Books in the house, Mother collecting antiques and art work (o) visiting museums, parents encouraging her to study (e) Parent's qualifications (i)
Aesha	Being competitive Parents encouraging her to succeed and valuing education Father sitting with her sibling and herself, talking about Education Having a supportive husband and having a housemaid "...if I didn't have full-time help, a nanny, I wouldn't have coped..."	"...being able to juggle things..." "...always being in the top set..." "...sometimes important to reduce dreams to smaller dreams once you have children..."	"...huge book case...and shelves of books and encyclopedias..." (o) Family view that your future only depends on your degree and your study (e) Father's qualifications (i)
Noor	Family support "Your drive as a woman and finances..."	"...if you achieve what you want then you are successful..." bringing up the children correctly and practice physiotherapy again or open her own physiotherapy practice	Reading, books in the house (o) Being organized and tidy and encouraged to study (e) Parents qualifications (i)
Fatima	Father was a great influence and her Father's friends Being a critical thinker "...the killer in every society is lack of innovation, creativity...young people, they can't think out of the box..."	Gaining a PhD	Books (o) Education was valued and supported with finances and encouragement, reading was commonplace, saw her parents working and studying (e) Parent's qualifications (i)
Nadia	Getting an education to get a good job, "...to improve out self (and) confidence for many things... we need to work...", "...to know more about this world..." passion and ambition "...man don't help ... or support the women... some men they don't like to see <i>metahla</i> (for example) his wife ... more better..." (in a better career or with higher educational achievement) lack of childcare facilities pressure from the family to get married and have children	"Doing a good job..." "...being proud of what you do..." "... to do a Masters (in psychology)... to teach psychology <i>inshallah</i> (God willing)..." or may be a PhD when her children are not babies anymore	Confidence and feeling that a women can achieve and that women are equal to men, passion and ambition (e) books in the home (o)
Hana	"...the main reason is economic because the standard of living are going up..." The media "... the more educated people...the more expectation..." Pressure from her Mother to help with the household chores	Gaining a PhD Economic independence "...I would really like to have my own place and have my own life but nobody can get everything...it's not that I can't do it, it's just that I don't want to do it because that would disgrace my family..."	Desire to reach full academic potential (e) Not being supported initially by parents and also not being encouraged to take a higher degree, but encouraged by her teachers (e)
Rehab	Parents – "I could always remember them saying 'yeh you know you are going to college and you are going to study abroad, you're going to work and you're going to get a degree' ..." "...it was always invested in our heads..." "...my mum was very strict with schooling...I could never get anything below an A..."	"I can see myself as an Ambassador...I think there is hope that they will take more women..."	Influenced by parents high view of education, books, TV and (later) computer in the home, (e and o) Mother collected art work when she traveled (o) Father's qualification (i)

	Extra pressures, for example not being able to afford a nanny for the children		
Sara	Father and teachers encouraging her in her education Time on her hands, in the home, as a girl Being culturally educated and open-minded	Doing a good job Travelling Enjoying life and "...following up on what my Kids are doing..."	Wanting to succeed (e) Father's qualification (i)
Mona	Liking school, wanting to study Using the Government library Having a good culture and ethos in schools, more prominent in private schools Mother encouraging her to study	"...that I raise a good children because children with good education, good behaviour, they can make different (a difference)...this is the main things..."	Wanting to study and read (e) Not being able to afford books, using the Government library (o)
Dana	Doing well at school Being able to study abroad with no restrictions such as needing to work instead or being a woman	Speaking good English "...it's nearest to my ambition..." "...having good children..."	Wanting to have a good job and work hard at school (e) Not having resources for learning
Lola	Having access to the media such as a television Thinking for yourself, "...we need to evaluate, analyze..." and think critically..." "...we learnt a great deal about culture (from) our Grandmother..." Not being able to study at home because of space Not being able to afford to carry on in education; not getting a grant	To gain a PhD To work with the top educational specialists researching and making theory Learning and using knowledge	Wanting to learn (e) Not having books and parents arguing about sending her to school(o)

Appendix Three

Sample of the first interview with Rehab

The highlighted areas indicate quotes that I have used directly from the transcript.

Interviewer Hi, what I am going to do then is ask the same questions to you as I do to the other people. There might be areas that you want to talk about, by all means do and if there is anything else that you think needs adding or at the end if there is any questions that you think I should include then please let me know. So, first of all a few questions regarding education.

Interviewer What age were you when you started school?

Rehab I started Kindergarten when I was about 4. I think I probably started the Semester when I was 3.5 but I turned 4 in December so I graduated High School at the age of 17 and I studied at the Baccalaureate International School all throughout and so I went to college in Boston at the age of 17 and I graduated at the age of 20. Normally Universities in the States are 4 years but I finished in 3 years. Because I had done the International Baccalaureate as well as a High Diploma, I also did a course at the University of Maryland in my senior year of High School, so they gave me credit for that. I did my, what was it, the summer before my senior year of High School I went to George Town University in Washington D.C. and I did a summer course there, a regular summer collage course but they offered it to High School students so I did two classes and I also got credits for that and I also got credits for International Baccalaureate so that was one semester and then I did two summers when I was in the States because I went to see Boston during the summer and there was some specific courses that weren't offered during the year but only in the summer so I stayed to do those courses and it just ended up being a whole year off. I graduated really young and came back to Bahrain right after that and you know I sort off took like a month off just getting back in to the routine and the whole culture shock and all that, settling down and then I went looking for a job and that was quite confusing because I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, where I wanted to work, whether I wanted to go in to banking or not because I have to choose now, I have to decide now what I want to do because this is the initial start and I am going in this one direction and after college I wanted to do a hundred things. I wasn't sure if I wanted to go into jewellery design or if I wanted to go into politics or if I wanted to go into business in banking you know or if I wanted to go into PR. It was like all these mumbo jumbo things I wanted to do but I ended up staying here 'cause I thought I wanted to go and do my Masters and then I wasn't sure whether to do my Masters then so you know I thought ok I need to stay here, try out different

sectors, you know find jobs here and there, see what I really like to do and then I shall stick to it but I just ended up staying here

Interviewer Yes

Rehab I found this job and I actually really like it and I think it really suits my personality although I never thought that I would ever think of applying to an Embassy or any Diplomatic Institution but it just came and I ended up staying and I really like it, it's been almost two years.

Interviewer And what's your exact job title?

Rehab I am the Cultural Affairs Specialist.

Interviewer Ok and what was your degree in?

Rehab My degree was in International Business Entrepreneurship

Interviewer Did you choose to go to the States for any particular reason?

Rehab Um, it was either England or the United States. I was more leaning to the American system rather than the British system, specially since like the school I went to follows the Americanised School Curricular and um I had done like the courses the summer before and two summers before I graduated I went to the Hunts School in Princeton and I did like SAT prep courses and I just knew I wanted to go to the States more than England. I didn't even bother applying at all

Interviewer Did you have American friends?

Rehab No. Yeh before I actually had American friends in Bahrain. They were my neighbours because I lived in a compound

Interviewer Right

Rehab Yeh, I mean like since I was 7 or 8 you know I can remember my friends

Interviewer I think that's one nice thing about Bahrain that um I live on a compound with some Americans, some British, Australian, someone from Finland and it's a real culture mix

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer In the U.K. it doesn't tend to be like that as much. Certain areas have certain nationalities

Rehab Right

Interviewer Or, you know, they stem from certain countries at least

Rehab Yeh, yeh

Interviewer But I like that though, I think it is really good for students actually in the schools.

Rehab I mean as a child I had friends from Japan and from Germany, Spain, England.

Interviewer Did you see your family as privileged being able to send you to that school because of finances?

Rehab Yeh, I mean it's surprisingly what, **my father studied in England for ten years from like 1961 to 1971, he did like his O Levels and A Levels, his Bachelors.** He worked there I think. But, so I mean like usually your parents want their kids to go to the same place they studied but my dad was completely pro American system, you know he told us "I want you guys to go to the States it is better than England". Yeh, he just thought the system was better. He noticed that the students that came back from England and students that came back from the States, the personality and the confidence from those graduated from the States was a lot more evident.

Interviewer I think I tend to agree, I think Americans can sell themselves more than British

Rehab Yeh, exactly...

Interviewer British are still very, sort of you know.

Rehab yeh yeh

Interviewer I don't know how to describe it really.

Rehab And plus my older sister and brother had gone to the States as well.

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab Now my younger sister is there, it is her second year.

Interviewer What about your mum, did she do any higher stuff?

Rehab No, she didn't

Interviewer Did she go to school?

Rehab Yes she did. My mother is not from Bahrain. My mother was born and raised in Shiraz and then when she got married she came here. But she is very poorly educated. I think there is not such thing as you don't go to college and like University of Bahrain is just not an option. My parents would never consider it like it was never even an option for them, they never even thought "oh yeh my kids might go to the University of Bahrain", never ever, ever. It was "like yeh oh ok which university in the States is it that you want to go to", My mother is very **pro education**.

Interviewer He wanted a high calorie University.

Rehab Oh yeh it was like ever since the day I was born I could always remember them saying "yeh you know you are going to college and you are going to study abroad, you're going to work and you're going to get a degree".

Interviewer High expectations.

Rehab Yeh it was always invested in our heads

Interviewer And you know students who, some of our school go to the University of Bahrain, um do you think sometimes that its financial reasons or is it because sometimes they see that sometimes it's girls going and they see that the girls will stay in Bahrain and work afterwards so they might not need educating abroad.

Rehab You see I think it's a mix. Well I think most of the people who go to the University of Bahrain go there because of financial reasons. I mean, I think anybody who can afford to send their kids and have educated them in private schools especially I don't think they would think that it makes sense to send them to University of Bahrain after all the money they have spent on them to be honest. High school and that level of education why waste it at the University of Bahrain. And I know I sound really mean when I talk about the University of Bahrain but I sometimes work with them a lot with my office and I just see how disorganised their system is and... like there's no way I would ever send my kids there. **It doesn't matter if I have to take ten thousand loans, I will take those loans and send my kids abroad; they will not study here.** Um, but then again I don't know twenty five years from now when I do have kids that are at the level of going to school but I'd still want them to study abroad because **it is a different experience**, a different learning experience, I mean it is the only time in your life when you can actually go out to do your bachelor's degree and you might as well get it from the best place, you know or like just, even experience life living abroad by yourself you learn so many more responsibilities. **I learnt a lot about society and myself** when I was in U.S. And also I think before it used to be more like our girls will stay

in Bahrain and our sons we will send abroad but now I think parents, I don't think they have this differentiation anymore between educating the guys and not educating their girls you know I think it has come to that point economically and socially where the girl has, I don't want to say has no choice, but wasn't has free as she was before, isn't freer to study or not want to study now it is like sort of you don't have an option you really must study, but **if a father took out a loan, he would probably take his son over his daughter**, this is the way, you see **it's our culture**, but it is not fair.

Interviewer Right

Rehab I mean it use to also be a very family issue or very like social issue, like "no no no if you are a decent girl and you are from a proper family then you wouldn't send your daughter abroad because what are people going to say" and whatever but now I think people, **Bahraini people**, well they **are loosening up and realising that you know it's very good for our daughter to send her abroad and get educated, so I think that is changing but there are some certain families that still would only send their sons and not their daughters.**

Interviewer And how would you, is there any connection between those families, how would you lump them together, sum them up?

Rehab Um. I would rather this off the record.

Interviewer Ok I will stop the tape

Rehab Then again X (another women being interviewed) can tell you more about that as she lives amongst that community but from what I see is that they're a lot more conservative, a lot more religious. I mean you can even see in their dress code like those girls you see in most Bahrain Malls that are all covered and black whatever you know, I mean **they are bright and they're intelligent and they do want to go out and work** and they do want to educate themselves but I don't think they'd ever see themselves, you know, going abroad to study or maybe, it is also probably because, a big factor is that financially they can't afford to go and also because they have much bigger families they probably have about 7 or 8 siblings I mean you can't really blame them because their parents, so like a lot of pressure lot of load on them, so probably in that situation the father, as I said, he would probably send his son over his daughter, you know. Or maybe like use up most of his savings to send his son over his daughter if he had to choose. But I think like most of the girls, I don't know the statistics but I am sure you can somehow find them that the number of graduates of high schools I think have increased I mean entering college you will find it know. Again I think it is due to economic reasons and also because I mean it is just awareness, people are more educated their interests have changed, their

cultural has changed, tradition, like some traditions are still there but like now I think those people are mostly relaxed you know they are not so uptight about ‘oh no this is wrong and this is right, oh no people are going to talk’ and, I mean like you can still do things in a decent way, people wont have to talk. So um yeh I think...

Interviewer So do you think **certain families are worried about what other people will think if they send their girls abroad?**

Rehab Yeh I mean it use to be like that a lot

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab Like you know when I was, for example in 6th Grade and somebody was just about to graduate and I would be like “oh yes so you know are you going to be going abroad” they are like “no you know my father would never allow it”. You know like those kinds of reasons.... “oh no you know my dad says girls are not supposed to go abroad it is only for the guys who should go” but now it’s changed and now the students themselves they really want to go. I know like all of the girls that graduated with me and the ones after, I graduated in 1997, so everyone that graduated after that, all of them wanted to apply abroad. Even my sister’s class who just graduated um she graduated two summers ago from high school and all of her class mates also went to college and most of them applied to universities outside Bahrain.

Interviewer Is it maybe to do with other people, for example, expatriates coming into the country and bringing their views and their values and their educational beliefs or is it television or...

Rehab We have always a good number of like ex-pats in Bahrain and foreigners. I don’t know if I would directly relate that. I don’t think I would directly relate that but then you also have, again the same like, I don’t what to like to split into two groups but it’s sort of always been that way, like most of the people like in private schools you know they are the ones that are more culturally aware, you know they travel, they have been exposed to a lot more things around the world, like they are more global, more cosmopolitan, you know they’ve met like a lot of people from different communities, different countries you know seen a lot of things so I think that contributes to a lot more than the foreigners coming here.

Interviewer So you were saying girls now, on the whole, want to go into higher education. What is the idea about women working with children? What are your family’s views on that?

Rehab I mean like is that a good thing or not a good thing. For some reason you see mainly more women working with children than you do with

men. Yeh I mean like if you go to the Hope Institute or even if you are going to Kindergarten you always find women are working with children and I think it is just the interest because I don't think men are interested in working with kids, I don't think men, they just have this role of, like, I want to make money and I am the bread winner of the family and it has always been like that. Men have always been the bread winners of the family like women were never expected to work and maybe that's why our grandmothers have never finished High School, never went to college you know it's because, it was just, and they never had a problem with it you know they just knew that you know we want to be like the mother, we want to be, that is why they have so many kids, they had 10, 12 kids back in my dad's mother and her mother's day. They were all really like large families, they got married really young at the age of like 12 or 13. So now I think men, you know they are looking for jobs like engineers, or into finance or banking or business, you know I don't think they really have an interest in ever working with kids. Especially because they probably never see their fathers working in that field you know so that they sort of follow in the footsteps of their dads and their grandfathers.

Interviewer I know that some students at our school would laugh at the fact that in the U.K. the odd husband is the house husband and the woman goes out to work you know if she can earn more money Um that happens on the odd occasion, I don't think it happens hardly ever here but they think that is really really strange and rather weird

Rehab I think it might have something do with the fact that **the male ego would be reduced if they weren't the bread winner**, that's true, that's very true I mean the man would never accept to rely on his wife, it would be like, I know I am the man, like it would be very unmanly of him

Interviewer Disrespectful maybe

Rehab Yeh and like, you know, it's like, I feel that way. I can't imagine how I would look at my dad if he was sitting at home and my mother was out working. I would feel like oh my God you know. I wouldn't be able to see my dad in that same way you know I don't think I'd have as much respect as I do now. You know, because I couldn't see it that way and even now if I was looking for like a husband **I would** never look for somebody who has got lower qualifications than I do. I'd want somebody **with at least the same or more qualifications because I want my kids to look up at their father** the way I looked up at my dad you know. **I would hate my kids to be like "look at my mother she has a PhD and my dad** dropped out of high school, you know he's just making, whatever 200 Dinars a month and she makes whatever, you know". I wouldn't feel comfortable, I don't think it would be a very happy family, or like marriage, it causes strain, does cause strain I think

and tension, I want my children to **look up to their father**, and plus also, in, it might even be a bit tied to religion sort of because in Islam the women, even if, I mean the woman is free to work, she can have her own business, like the Prophet's first wife she was a business woman – do you know, she used to make more than him and she was older than him and they got married and women are allowed to work and they are even encouraged like there is nothing in the Qur'an that says she cannot work and she is to sit at home whatever but um the woman has a right to ask for money. Like she, whatever she makes for herself she has the right to not spend a single penny of it if she doesn't want to, it's the man's job he has to be the provider

Interviewer for the family

Rehab Yeh, like he can never go and tell his wife oh you know you have to pay for the house because she has every single right to keep that money. You know it's like his role, his responsibility, he's the one that is responsible and also like also you know it has been that way, the father is always responsible for the wife and he's the one responsible for the daughters and his kids and you know if the father passes away it goes down to the brother, if he's old enough, or to the uncles, they're the ones who become the care takers. You know and even with inheritance you know there is always this argument that you know that Islam is so unfair because the guy gets double what the girl gets for inheritance but if you look, if you really like analyse that the reason behind that is because the woman has the right to keep the money and not spend it, she can do whatever she wants and nobody can tell her, even her husband can't tell her how to spend her money. You know she can spend it the way she wants...

Interviewer I like that idea

Rehab she can save it the way she likes but the guy, the son will get double because he has to provide for his sister, and his mother and his wife and his kids so he has to spend on them so that's why he gets more

Interviewer So he needs it

Rehab He needs it basically you know so I mean if you think of it it actually makes sense

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab But I mean I think it has always been that way so it has become part of our culture that it has always been the man that takes care of things

Interviewer Some people say that people educate their daughters whether it is abroad or here so that they then get good husbands, do you think that

has something to do with education so they are mixing in the right circles and so on?

- Rehab I think it does as well because an educated woman, a guy would have less control over her as a husband. There is a lot of social problems out of Bahrain you know like women who want to get a divorce but they are stuck because first of all we have a weird judicial system which is completely out of subject but also because if the woman gets divorced and she is not fully educated or she has never worked she doesn't even have a University degree what is she going to do, who's she going to turn to...
- Interviewer She won't be able to survive
- Rehab She won't be able to support herself because for 20 years she has been raising her kids and the husband has been out working and making all the money and she has been focusing all her attention on her family and now after 25 years when they have problems or when problems have just been accumulating and finally she is sick of it and she wants to get a divorce she has nowhere to go. Like, of course, the family will support her but what if they are not around, like maybe she might not have a father, maybe her brothers are already having problems with their wives and their family and they can't support her and her kids. You know so now women are more aware of that and so a woman who has a problem that way would want to educate her daughter so her daughter wouldn't get put in that situation.
- Interviewer So education **gives you choices** really
- Rehab Of course it does, I mean I fully support that and agree with that.
- Interviewer Yeh
- Rehab And a lot of parents don't want their daughters to get married until they have their degree in their hand. It doesn't matter if they haven't started working or not but finish college and then you can get married, that's always... I think I feel that most people are like that
- Interviewer Do you think female models help, seeing other women in jobs that are good jobs?
- Rehab Yeh definitely, definitely I think so. I mean you'd look at them and be like there is hope. I could become a Bank Manager, I could in the Parliament if we ever get a woman in there. You know but yeh definitely it helps.

Interviewer What was um, you want a Government School. I was going to ask a comparison between Government Schools and the Private Schools, what is your gut reaction; I know you have only done one sector but...

Rehab In terms of what, what do you mean?

Interviewer In terms of the education is given, really

Rehab I haven't studied in a government school but because we work closely with the Ministry of Education um I do know like on the surface about the way their curriculum works and I have also seen, I mean like **if you compare the quality of someone graduating from a private compared to a public school, you can tell the difference, I mean, for example, the level of English**, just that itself is a **disadvantage because when they apply for a job**, because you know you have people from private schools who have really good English and are very well educated and maybe someone from the public school who probably, you know, maybe does know the same amount of Maths and same amount of Science and all that but, you know, is at a disadvantage because when they go to apply for a job. I mean **even if they both put down on their C.V., their resume, knowledge of English and Arabic, when they go for the interview you can obviously tell who is the better spoken in the English** language. That is a disadvantage to them again I hate being biased but I don't think their education system is very strong, at all and I know that **the government are working to try to strengthen it and they're trying to, you know, develop their curriculum** and now I think they want to teach English at First Grade, they use to start at 4th grade but now I think they have brought it down to 3rd grade and now I think they want to bring it down to 2nd Grade so they are doing teacher training and stuff. But, um I mean I think the quality of teachers and you know they don't have as many programs as they do in private schools, even with activities so I mean it is, I mean if I had the choice of course I would send my children to private school. Even if I have to send them to boarding school, if that is going to be the best education, but **this is the best way, when you are young**.

Interviewer That's the choice

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer What were your dreams and wishes when you were at school? What did you dream of becoming career wise?

Rehab I always imagined being a business woman and I think that is why I want to study entrepreneurship but now I think I am going to become a politician, I talked to family and friends and saw **real life**, you know, real life **examples** of these jobs.

Interviewer Excellent. Did you um did you get guidance in school about what careers to choose or did you get help from your family regarding that?

Rehab Um yeh for some reason it was always imbedded in my head that I would go into Commerce, ever since I could remember you know, even in First Grade you know when they asked me “so what do you want to do when you grow up?”, I said “I want to be a business woman”, you know, even though I hardly knew what it meant but I knew that I wanted to be a business women I guess it was always fed in my mind or I had an interest in it. I mean I never thought, I know I didn’t want to be a doctor, I did have an interest at one point in becoming a dentist but I can’t deal with blood and with injections so that would have been like a complete failure in my career.

Interviewer Yeh not ideal

Rehab But um I mean at the time of like going to college there was several different Majors that I thought I would like to go in, I was interested in psychology but then I was thinking do I want to study psychology I could just take courses ah maybe I should just stick to business but I was more leaning towards business.

Interviewer Which involves psychology in a way doesn’t it

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer and how did your mum influence you, you said about your dad and he was very strong towards education?

Rehab Oh yeh, my mother was very strict with schooling, I mean it was always education was number one and like I was a go getter in school you know. I had to, I could never get anything below an A, A- and that was it, if it was a B+ it was like no good so I mean I was pushed myself at school and my parents always supported me in school

Interviewer What do you think motivated you so much?

Rehab I think I did it for, I have to say I did a lot of it for my parents 'cause I knew that it pleased them. You now and I think that as a child if your parents are good to you, you automatically want to be their good child, perfect child, you know. But I mean it was a personal thing as well like if I didn’t get a good score on my test it would kill me so I really wanted to achieve, I really wanted to do well

Interviewer so for yourself as well

Rehab Yes definitely

Interviewer Did you, were you involved in household chores at home or did you have someone do washing dishes or any of that side of things?

Rehab No, I mean just like make you know sure your room is tidy but I never had to make my own bed or anything

Interviewer So time wasn't taken up looking after younger siblings or...

Rehab No

Interviewer 'Cause obviously that's social class obviously some students whose families that are poorer have that side to handle as well as everything else. Certainly in the U.K. some parents have to work at night so trying to do their homework, the children, when the, you know. I suppose that might happen here as well if someone was a taxi driver or something like that

Rehab Yeh, probably maybe they have their older children, you know, looking after the younger kids

Interviewer Yeh and um did any of your parents' family and friends influence your career, you know the types of jobs that they were in, so in a way the type of jobs that you were made aware of?

Rehab Most of my family and family friends were all into business, most of them. I mean like, I mean even if they didn't study business they still were doing things with business. Like my dad he studied Civil Engineering but he is a businessman. I mean his business is related to Engineering but he is not like a direct engineer.

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab You know

Interviewer and your mum doesn't work

Rehab No

Interviewer Do you know if she ever wanted to work or her choice not to?

Rehab Um, I think it was out of choice because she had a baby as soon as she got married, so I think

Interviewer she had enough to do.

Rehab Yeh and I mean it was back in the 70s so, you know, in the 70s it wasn't like uh.... I mean it is only now that you find women looking for jobs and like wanting as well as needing to work so yeh. But I mean at one

point she did start her own little business, like selling carpets and antiques because she had an interest for that.

Interviewer Right

Rehab But then it just took too much of her time and I mean it wasn't necessary for her to do it. I mean she still collects the antiques you know she's interested in all that like arty stuff which she does for her own personal reasons but no she's not

Interviewer And do you think if you married and you had children do you think you would work?

Rehab I'd like to keep on working, I mean, just because out of interest but I don't know, I mean I have no idea what my situation will be like. You know maybe I'll have like, maybe I won't be in Bahrain, maybe I will be abroad and you know or maybe.... But I mean I would like to keep working but it depends if I have too many kids at once like oops I got twins the first time around I'd be like oops it's like too much, maybe I'd stop for a while. But like my sister she got married and then she got pregnant first year of marriage and she was still working and then when she gave birth she did her maternity, took her maternity and then she went back to work but she didn't stay for, she just stayed 2 or 3 months after that and then she resigned because she found it difficult because like her hours were really long she was working in a bank and she, like her, she was constantly thinking about her son all the time and like calling in "is he ok" I mean thank god like my mother was there and she was more than happy to be with her grand son you know like she'd rather like have him live in the house than at my sister's house. I mean that was not a problem at all and we've got nannies and stuff but like you know she wants..... I think as a mother you get this maternal instinct that you can't be away from your baby and it was hard because she had to go back and forth and nurse the baby and then come back to work. And then her husband was like I mean my dad and her husband go to her like "you know why are you working you don't have to go back to your job you stay at home you know and be with the child", she said "no, no, no I want to go back to my job" and then after she was like "ok you know it's hard...".

Interviewer doing both

Rehab yeh it's hard doing both especially when you have to work until 6.

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer You feel like you are missing out and you're not doing anything properly or something

Rehab So um she quit but now she's like more than busy. She has another baby, busy with her house and the kids.

Interviewer I think I would like to work part-time just because with being a teacher you have to keep in touch with what's going on if you want to work later um you know when the children are grown up so... I think that's what I will do

Rehab Yeh, I think part-time

Interviewer Did you enjoy school?

Rehab Yeh I did, yeh

Interviewer And what sort of things, what sort of words would you use to describe school?

Rehab School um I mean it was basically where I spent most of my day you know it was obviously like the learning experience, it was fun yet very beneficial. We would also socialise a lot at school

Interviewer Because of extra activities?

Rehab Oh yeh, I was very active like I was staying after school very day of the week I had something whether it was for the Year Book, I was Year Book Editor at senior year, and I was working on the Year Book since I was in 7th Grade, very active you know, the **Photography Club and the Environmental Club and Volley Ball team and doing all the fund raising activities** there was like the head big sub committee what else....

Interviewer So you really made a go of it

Rehab Yeh yeh I was like I took advantage of everything I don't like it when things come by and I just watch it and not take advantage of it, of course I want to make use of it. That's also how my personality is.

Interviewer and um you have lived in Bahrain all your life apart from the time you were in the States. Brothers and sisters then, you mention your sister there, have you got any brothers?

Rehab Yes I have an older brother and um he also went to the States and he studied in Washington D.C. He did his Bachelors and his Masters and then he came back and now he has started up his own company and works closely to my dad almost the same field, kind of, yeh.

Interviewer What were your favourite subjects at school?

Rehab I liked English, I enjoyed my French class, I like languages so I'd like French, Arts

Interviewer Communication

Rehab Yeh, I like Biology a lot, I really enjoyed that um

Interviewer Do you think school did enough to help you as a woman to choose your career?

Rehab I think I had already chosen my career at a very young age, it was decided. But it definitely does, it does, you know, influence the way you were educated the way your classes were taught, you know

Interviewer Did teachers um treat male and females differently or did you do different subjects on the whole?

Rehab No I never felt that, never

Interviewer Um Where do you see yourself being in 10 years time, more career wise than

Rehab I can see myself as an Ambassador

Interviewer Why

Rehab There was an Ambassador, a female Ambassador to France, she was, I can't remember her name right now but she was from the Al Khalifa family and that happened a few years ago so I think there is hope that they will take more women. I know that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are looking for younger you know audiences also they are hiring a lot of girls, a lot of women so...

Interviewer That's good. Do you think that is just a sort of political move to make people believe that they are more liberal or you do actually believe that the people at the top value women's opinions in things like politics and so on.

Rehab I think, I mean I definitely think that women have potential in Bahrain to move politically because things are just changing so rapidly I mean its unbelievable how like, how active and involved women are, you know ever since the whole Charter was launched or whatever and with the Municipality elections and the Parliamentary elections and we have women on the Sharia Council and I think we are definitely moving in that direction. You know we will have more active women directly in

politics. And then, of course, you have the Supreme Council for Women which is helping you know it is getting women involved.

Interviewer I think as well it is good because women have different perspectives on things

Rehab oh yeh

Interviewer and half the population is women

Rehab Exactly

Interviewer Ok um I think that's it really. Is there anything else you would want to add, anything you think I should know...

Rehab in terms of education or.

Interviewer yeh, I always thought that religion might be something to do with why people don't go abroad because maybe they're worried that women...

Rehab corrupt

Interviewer yeh or come back with different views that don't respect family's views.

Rehab Yeh, I think in some cultures in Bahrain that would be it. I think parents always worry about their daughters, their children you know. Not just religious rights but I mean also their, they wouldn't want them, like getting involved in drugs I mean that is also a big thing in religion you know drugs and alcohol and things like that but um I think if you I think if you raise your kids in the normal environment for them to feel normal about things you know they are not going to. You know if you lock them in a tight shell and just release them they will just want to do everything you know, they just want to be crazy

Interviewer Rebel

Rehab Exactly

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab So if they are just normal and they're you know they shouldn't want to have reasons to do weird things that they wouldn't do in Bahrain you know.

Interviewer So they should take their values with them really

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab I mean like I was living alone in the States and my parents were a couple of thousand miles away from me and I could have done anything I wanted to do there but I just never felt that I wanted to, I never felt the need you know, the urge to do it, it never even crossed my mind. I think it is because I was raised in a normal environment.

Interviewer You respected your parents

Rehab Yeh definitely and then again you know I had a head on my shoulders and I think my parents put a lot of sense into my head as I was growing up as well as, you know, educating myself. I mean when I think about it I would never want to do anything stupid, I have come this far after 23 years why would I choose now to do something dumb, you know. I think I'm wiser just because

Interviewer one last question then. What made you come back to Bahrain after you studied abroad and was it hard to adjust when you came back?

Rehab It was very hard to adjust

Interviewer Why

Rehab It was extremely difficult to adjust um I mean I had to come, I had no choice I mean where am I going to go if I don't come back here and I was young, I was 20 and I wanted to be back with my family for a bit I mean but if I could have it my way I would love to be working abroad somewhere right now and you know living somewhere else and experiencing, you know learning new things about that culture. Like I said I love languages and so I love different cultures and learning about people, their origins and ethnic backgrounds, things like that. But on a personal level I would love to be somewhere for a couple of years cause I know that Bahrain will always be there for me you know I have my roots here, my family here, I've got my home here.

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab So, at least I... I probably take that for granted but I know that I can always come back here, I will always be welcome here, we don't have any political problems or you know social problems, you know.

Interviewer Yeh

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer So when you say it was hard to adjust was that because for example you lived on your own and then you went back living with your family?

Rehab The culture here you know its, I was free to go in and out whenever I wanted come, you know, come home late, leave home early you know but over here its like you have to go back to the rules again.

Interviewer Family rules.

Rehab Yeh, you have your curfews you know and although I felt like, you know I went to college and I'm working and I am independent you know why do I have to follow by these rules and it is not because my parents want to be controlling it's just because again its like the culture here, you know

Interviewer So you wouldn't ever consider living on your home here.

Rehab I would love to, I could never, no way. Girls would never move out of their parent's house and like get their own apartment or anything like that, but a woman without a qualification, if, for example, she was divorces, **what's she gonna do?** And she may go home.

Interviewer But they always live at home until they get married

Rehab Yeh

Interviewer Anything else

Rehab No I think you have covered everything, if you have any other questions that you remember, that you want to ask me, you can always call me.

Interviewer Thank you very much indeed.

Appendix Four

All the women interviewed worked outside the home in a range of professions at some point in their career, either part-time, full-time or self-employed. Some Bahraini women believe that the rights of women in the Qur'an and those asserted by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him), are sympathetic to women and only need re-interpreting for modern times. Pirzada and Puir (1998) found that 73% of Bahraini women interviewed in the thirty to forty age group stressed the positive benefits and rights given to them in the Qur'an, when discussing Islamic values. However, modernists who advocate women's reforms are in the minority in Bahrain and tend to come from wealthier families who have experienced education in the West (Bashier 1985) and have traveled (Fakhro 1990). This appears to also be the case for Bahraini women who have experienced a Western style education in Bahrain, i.e. those that have attended private schools. Fakhro (1990) believes that rural women are those who 'suffer' more from tradition and these women spend so many of their years bearing and caring for children. Similar views are expressed by this sample of women. In particular, Mona who says that rural women have "...very few options..." regarding their life choices, mainly due to their culture and traditional values. Therefore, women from higher social classes have more choices and yet both Lola and Hana managed to succeed in education (and work outside the home) despite economic hardship, in great contrast to the lives experienced by their own mothers.

Iman's mother obtained her degree whilst her children were growing up and yet Iman chose to be a housewife. In contrast, three of the women's mothers worked outside the home. Mona's mother worked in a hospital due to financial necessity, whereas the mothers of Noor and Fatima, who were both married to business men, where economic capital was evident in their interviews through, for example, foreign travel, chose to work outside the home. In this sample of women, those who attended private school, were more likely to have a mother who worked outside the home, and this tended to be by choice as opposed to financial necessity.

There does not appear to be a link between the amount of the different forms of cultural capital expended by the women and their position within the workforce in Bahrain. For example, both women in the centre of the diagram (p84) and those around the edges work in professional and senior positions in education, medicine and business. Therefore, not only have some of the women from the dominant classes reproduced themselves, i.e. attained a position where they can sustain their socio-economic status (Bourdieu 2001), some of those with less cultural capital have improved their socio-economic status, especially Dana whose father was a bus driver and yet she

is a pharmacist; Hana whose father was an upholsterer but she now works as a Cultural Affairs Specialist, and Lola who is a Senior Educational Advisor and her father was a pipe fitter and chef. I was reluctant to label the women as a certain class depending on their father's occupation, however, it was difficult to find an alternative. This justifies detailing their mother's occupations. In these cases all three of their mothers were house wives and all three came from large families, for example, eight or nine sibling. Bruner (1993) talks of breaking one's habitus, the internalized values passed down through generations that are influenced by social class (Bourdieu 1999), as a deliberative and reflective process. This is evident where both Hana and Lola talk of having different values than their mothers (Bourdieu 2001), they wanted to work outside the home, succeed in education and not have as many children as their mothers, if any. Although, for Hana it was difficult to break "...loose of patriarchal shackles..." (Moi 1990 p285). Lola talks of wanting financial independence (Hassan 1998; Stowaser 1993) and compares this to her own mother's circumstances where she was unable to work outside the home due to the number of children that she had. She says that she was able to make meaning from her life history interview through metacognition (Bruner 1961), by reflecting upon and using knowledge to modify learning processes and strategies, as she now understands "...why she wants...[her] children to have a university education...", so that their lives can be "...easier...". Hana also acknowledged that she has learnt about herself and her "...beliefs..." through the life history interviews.